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LIFE

OF

Rai Durgagati Banerjea
Bahadur, C.I.E.,

SOMETIME COLLECTOR OF CALCUTTA.

BY

MANMATHA NATH MUKERJEA, M.A., B.L.

(Member, Royal Asiatic Society, London;
Deputy Magistrate & Deputy Collector, Bengal).

Calcutta.

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PRAMATHA NATH MUKERJEA,

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DEDICATED

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TO

SIR STEUART COLVIN BAYLEY, G.C.S.I., C.I.E.,

Late Lieut.-Governor of Bengal,

Member of the Council of India,

&c., &c.,

PREFACE.

Since the death of my late lamented grand-father in March 1903, the thought of bringing out his life has been uppermost in my mind, but want of sufficient leisure hitherto prevented me from carrying out my intention.

In publishing now this short memoir I have not been actuated by any feeling of ambition as a writer, for I do not pretend to possess any capacity as such, but solely by a desire to preserve his memory, and to show in a subsidiary way, how an Indian could by dint of sheer merit, raise himself to a unique position in official and public life, and earn honors and distinctions. I have also been moved by a strong desire to compile and publish, more or less in a systematic form, the large number of letters he had the good fortune to receive from his different official superiors and friends—letters, which, I venture to say, are very rare to find in these days of “sun-dried bureaucracy,” breathing, as they do, a sincere and deep feeling of friendship, regard and esteem. I have however, for obvious reasons, been debarred from utilising the whole of the immense heap of his correspondence, for some of it is of a private or confidential character, and I had to leave out letters or portions of letters, which bore the least trace of such a character. But I hope that the amount of correspondence published is sufficiently comprehensive to serve its purpose, the book being more a compilation than, anything else.

I am proud to state that Sir Steuart Colvin Bayley, G. C. S. I., C. I. E., has accorded his kind permission to dedicate this memoir to him in a letter which I have the greatest pleasure to append below :—

Dec. 31st, 16.

THE OLD HOUSE,
Brentwood.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of November 5th only came to my hands yesterday. It was addressed to the India Office, who forwarded it, not to me, but to my nephew, and not to his proper address but an old one ; ultimately when I happened to call yesterday at his house I received it. I hope the delay in answering it has not put you to any inconvenience, but the fault was not mine.

I shall of course be pleased and honoured to have the "life" of your grandfather dedicated to me and I hope the book will be a great success. But having completed my 80th year and being very little in the world just now, I am a good deal out of touch with Indian life and do not know how far, outside the circle of his immediate family, Durgagati is remembered. Anyway he was a man of very remarkable ability and of sterling worth, whose life well deserved to be written, and I hope that it will prove a great success. With all good wishes for the New Year,

I am, yours sincerely,
S. C. BAYLEY.

In conclusion I beg to acknowledge my grateful thanks to Sir Francis Hugh Stewart, M. A., C. I. E., for kindly going through the manuscript and for valuable suggestions.

I must also mention my friend Babu Kunja Bihari Roy, B. A., who saw these pages through the press.

KRISHNAGAR,
Dated the 1st Dec. 1917.

M. N. MUKERJEA.

*and the last copy
of the author's
manuscript*

Rai
Durgagati Banerji
Bahadur, C.I.E.

CHAPTER I.

**BIRTH, EDUCATION AND EARLY YEARS
AT BIRBHUM.**

Durgagati Banerji was born on the 26th *Magh*, 1755 Saka, corresponding to the 19th January, 1834, at Moynapur, Burdwan, at the residence of his maternal grand-father, Tariniprosad Mukerjee, father of the late Rai Jagodananda Mukerjee Bahadur and brothers, or the famous "Nanda brothers", as they came to be known at a later date. Durgagati's father Ramkrishna was a Kulin Brahmin of the bluest of blue stocks, being the nephew of Prannath Chowdhury, the Satkhira magnate. He had eight children—four sons and four daughters—of whom Durgagati was the second, the first being a daughter who died in infancy. A genealogical table is given in the appendix.

Durgagati had his elementary education—knowledge of the three R's—at the usual village *Pathshala*, at the feet of the ubiquitous village pedagogue or Guru Mohashoya. At the age of eight he was sent to Bankura, where his grand-father was employed, for admission into the local school, in spite of the great reluctance of the

pupil who was a very affectionate son and was quite unwilling to leave his loving mother. He did not, however, seem to have made much progress and had to finish his education at the early age of sixteen. Even at that callow age, his inborn independence was predominant and he was determined to make his own fortune, instead of being a dependent on the generosity of his loving relations. He joined the public service as an apprentice at Birbhum under his maternal uncle, Babu Syamolananda Mukherjee, a younger brother of Babu Jasodananda, and Deputy Magistrate, on a very meagre salary. From such a small beginning he gradually rose to be the Chief Ministerial Officer* in the Court of the District Judge of Birbhum, by sheer dint of merit, perseverance and integrity. Here he had his first baptism of fire, so to say, and here he devoured with great avidity all the famous circulars and despatches of Government which, he used to say in after life, gave him a complete grip of official correspondence and, in his later career, carried him forward to success. He imitated his uncle who had the reputation of being a very able officer and it was he, who gave him the proper training necessary for a successful start in life. He held the appointment of Sheristadar up to August 1865 when he was rewarded with a Deputy Magistrateship. He was held in such a high esteem that, on the retirement of Mr. O. W. Malet, the then District Judge of Birbhum in 1864, that officer presented him with a gold watch, and made the following observations in a public speech :—

* He was first appointed an Accountant, then Headwriter, then Translator and lastly Sharistadar.

"I have called you together on the last day that I shall hold Cutcheree (Court), that I may thank you for the cordial co-operation you have shown in the good work of making this Court the model Adalat (Court) of this District. Those who have been here long will allow that there is difference between what it was and what it is.

* * * * *

"I hope I may be speaking the truth when I say that this Court is now, and has for some time been, free from the abominable stain of corruption. For this great fact we are mainly indebted to the Native Head of the Office, as such practices are out of the reach of the European superior.

* * * * *

"To Durgagaty Banerjee, as Sheristadar, my chief thanks are due. As a token of my esteem and as a testimonial of my appreciation of his conduct, I here, before you all, present him with a watch, which I have been in the habit of wearing. He will, I hope, long wear it. I hope it will also serve as an encouragement to all the *amla* of lower rank to do as he has done, and to remember that 'honesty is the best policy'." How fond Mr. Malet was of his subordinate and how great was his regard for him will be evident from the following letters written on the eve of retirement and from home, years afterwards :—

ALIPORE,
11th April, 1864.

My dear Durgagati,

Remember me most kindly to all at Birbhum and once more take a most kind farewell from myself to yourself. Remember me particularly to Kedarnath Ganguly, the school master (1) Benode Behari Sen, (2) G. B. Tumkins, Dwarkanath, Keramat Ali, Peary Mohon, the peshkar, Bykunth, the Nazir, (3) Golam Russool, (4) Kisto Kerani, and your keranis. But I must not make my note too long. I have a great regard for all and as said in my address, wish you an affectionate farewell, an am, my dear Durgagati,

Very sincerely yours,
O. W. MALET.

NETHERLEY HOUSE NEAR TAUNTON,
Somerset, England, 1st June 1864.

MY DEAR DURGAGUTTY,

Thank God we have all arrived safe and sound in our native country. I am now in the house of my younger brother who had conjointly with my mother, the care of my children, and thank God, we have found all well and we are well ourselves. We had a pleasant journey home on board the first steamer. We sat next to Sir Barnes and Lady Peacock. Mr. Raikes sat

(1) A Zamindar, (2) A Sadar Amin, (3) Inspector of Police,
(4) Head Clerk, Judge's Office.

opposite to us and Mr. Louis Jackson of the High Court also a few seats lower down. We had a great many passengers, but all got on very well together and we had very fine weather. When we got to Egypt we separated. Sir Barnes and Lady Peacock and ourselves went *via* Marseilles and Mr. Raikes and Mr. Jackson and their families went by Southampton. We stayed sometime in Paris which is a very beautiful city, and then came over to England. We find it much as we left it, but even at the time I am writing it is very cold and we are glad to have fires in the room we sit any morning and evening. Mrs. Malet and I often talk about Birbhum and the children also remember it, but they see so many new things, they do not talk much about it or any of you. I am going to have the addresses made to me printed in pamphlet form. I should like to have a translation of the one made by Tumkin, if it is to be got. Hoping you are all well at Birbhum and that you get on well with Mr. Toogood and begging to be remembered to Kedar Nath Ganguly, Dwarkanath, Benoderam and others,

I am very sincerely yours,

O. W. MALET.

WESTBURY LODGE, FURDHAMDOWN, NEAR BRISTOL,
20th August, '64.

MY DEAR GUTTY,

I was very glad to receive your letter of the 7th, July, which owing to my absence from home on a visit to a brother of mine who lives in another part of the

country, I did not get till too late to answer by the Southampton mail. My former letter will have told you of our safe arrival in England and I hope also that you have by this time got the printed copies of the addresses etc. I had them printed for distribution to my friends, and one and all consider that they do credit to all the parties concerned *i. e.* both to the donor and the receiver. You do not tell me if my four scholarships have yet been given or not. There will, I should think, be a great many candidates. I hope preference will be given to the children of people of good family in reduced circumstances. I am very glad to hear that Mr. Toogood is kind and considerate to you. I do not suppose that Dwarka Nath Chuckerbutty* has heard any more from the Legal Remembrancer. I wrote to Mr. Grote about him before I left Calcutta and I also spoke to Sir Barnes Peacock on board ship, but as I daresay as you have experienced in most cases, it is out of sight, out of mind, and the chances are, that what I said is forgotten by this time and I have not seen Sir Barnes since we left the ship. I have not yet seen any of the Council except Mr. Mangles who congratulated me on the good opinion held of me by the natives of the country. So I suppose he had heard of the addresses. I have since sent him and Mr. Willoughby, Sir Fred. Currie and Mr. J. Macnaughten, all councillors, separate copies. I am sorry to hear that the Nagore Rajah has behaved in such a way. I am sure instead of that, he ought to be much obliged to you for all that you did in his behalf and I think he will find that that sale was very good for him.

* Pleader and later on, Vakil of the High Court.

If he and his people do not get more sense into their heads, the family will ere long come to ruin, just at the time when by good management it might be revived by the resumption of the Ghatwalli estate. You do not tell me if that case of Munohar Deo has been appealed to. Nor do you tell me anything about the Hetampur boy. I hope he is going on well. If he goes down to Calcutta when a little older I should not mind it, but I hope he will not fall into bad habits when he does so. The two children both remember you quite well. Herbert says that Gutty Babu and his mother and his wife and his children are all well and begs me to tell you he is very happy because he has his brothers and his sisters with him. Mrs. Malet, I am thankful to say continues well, and with her and my own kind regards and remembrances to all my old friends,

I am, very sincerely yours,
O. W. MALET.

HAYGRASS HOUSE NEAR TAUNTON, SOMERSET,
England, December 6, 1864.

My dear Gutty,

I have just got your letter of the 19th October and am much vexed at its contents. How is it that you have not got my letters? I do not understand. I have written three to you since I came home besides this, one when I first came home, and the other two in answer

to the two I received from you. You have done a great deal of good to the people in Suri in various ways, such as attending to education, curing people when the cholera was prevalent, taking notice of the filthy state of the town etc. All this of course makes you talked about. Owing to your good management the Suri vernacular school is considered a model. When you write to me again tell me about the people at Suri, about old Benoderam Sen and how the Government School is getting on, whether you have done anything more about female education. Anything relating to poor old Birbhum is interesting to me and will always be so. Sir Barnes Peacock dined with us a few days ago. We came home in the same ship with him. Thank God we continue well, though now the cold weather is beginning, it is not good for Mrs. Malet's cough. The two little children still remember India and Gutty Babu, but it often not being talked about before them I suppose, it gradually goes out of their remembrance, as it has out of that of the elder children, and now I must "close this letter. I hope you will soon get your Dy. Magistracy and get on independent. One thing, if you can get one under Montessor, he will do you justice. Mrs. Malet's kind remembrances.

I am, sincerely yours,

O. W. MALET.

I will direct this under cover in hopes that it may reach you safe.

HAYGRASS HOUSE NEAR TAUNTON,
Somerset, 2nd June, 1865.

My dear Durgagati,

I write to tell you that I have received your last letters all in due course. I hope you found when Mr. J. took the Judge's Office that he was not so inimical to you as you expected. You know that you thought that Mr. T. was adverse to you at first, but when he came to know you well he and Mr. J. also held the same opinion of you as I did. You may depend upon it that truth and honesty must tell in the long run. I shall be anxious however till I hear again. Last month I got a letter from the Sonarundee Raja. Well, remember me to him and say I am glad to hear he is well and will answer when I have time. Thank God that we are all well. We are having beautiful weather and enjoying ourselves much. Remember me to all my friends and believe me,

Very sincerely yours,
 O. W. MALET.

P. S. I find on looking over my letter I told you nothing about ourselves. We have taken a house as you will see by the date about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from a place called Taunton, a large town in the west of England. It is ready furnished and we pay for it £150 a year. It is a good large house with plenty of accommodation and beautifully furnished. You may fancy how well the best sitting room looks, when I tell you that it has no less than four large mirrors in it, two marble tables, two

polished wooden ones of very handsome wood and we have also in it our two Japan tables that you saw in India. Besides this there are a couch or ottoman, and plenty of chairs and handsome ornaments of different cuts. We have not much ground about the house, not more than a few acres, but there is a good garden for flowers and vegetables and numbers of ornamental trees planted about, so that it is altogether a very nice place. Taunton (the town) has a Railway Station, so it is a convenient place. Thank God that we have generally had good health but just now Mrs. Malet, I am very sorry to say, is not very well. The two younger children, particularly Herbert, remember India and all of you perfectly. Once more I write that I am sincerely yours,

O. W. MALET.

HAYGRASS HOUSE NEAR TAUNTON,
Somerset, 16th Oct. 1865.

My dear Guppy,

My best thanks for your letter of the 7th August which with your former letter which I answered both came up to hand, but as I was moving about, the last letter did not come in time for me to answer, as I should have wished by return of post. How is the school getting on? I hope well. Education is what is wanted. Have you done about a girl's school yet? How is your brother? My kind remembrance and Mrs. Malet's also, to all old friends, and believe me,

Very sincerely yours,
O. W. MALET.

P. S. I enclose photographs of ourselves taken from pictures which I hope you and Kedar Nath will like. I have no more to send, but these, if any one likes them, can be copied. I do not think they are so much like as if taken from life, but still they will do to keep us in mind. I am extra pressed for time so have not been able to write a lengthy letter.

No. 1. Mr. O. W. Malet.

Miss. Mabel Malet.

Miss. Ethel Malet.

No. 2. Mrs. O. W. Malet.

Master Francis Malet.

„ John Malet.

„ Herbert Malet.

Yours very truly,

O. W. MALET.

HAYGRASS HOUSE NEAR TAUNTON,

Somerset, 9th Novr. 1865.

My dear Durgagati,

I have got your letter from Gaya ; the one which you say you sent me announcing your having got your Deputy Magistracy I did not get, and I was wondering why I had not heard from you as I had heard from a letter written to Mrs. Malet by Mrs. King that the appointment had been given you. I will without fail write to Mr. E. to transfer you to Bengal proper. I am sorry to hear what you say of the different gentlemen at your station, but you cannot expect ever again to be on the same terms as we all were at Suri. There we all knew

each other well and the consequence was a mutual regard and esteem. I do not know Mr. D. well, but enough to give you a formal note of introduction which I will enclose. I am sorry to hear what you say about Mr. H. I wonder what can be the cause of his changing so much, but as I said before, you must not expect to find the intercourse between Europeans and Natives the same as it was at Suri. I thank you for your enquiry about Mrs. Malet and children. All are well. I hope you and Kedarnath got the photos I sent you, 2 for each of you—with Mrs. Malet and the 3 boys in one and I with the two girls in the other. Answer this, as, if you have not got them. I will send you other copies. You were to⁶ have sent me one of yourself. When you next write, tell me some news of the old friends I left behind at Suri. I heard lately from Benode Ram Sen who tells me you had another case brought against you. I fear that your connexion with the Hetampur family has done you no good. Mrs. Malet sends her kind regards and,

Yours very sincerely,
O. W. MALET.

HAYGRASS HOUSE NEAR TAUNTON,
Somerset, 30th May, 1866.

My dear Durgagati,

I thank you for your letters received some weeks since. Now your character must be well known to Govt. as an honest, upright man and you will, I doubt not, in due time, rise to the highest appointment. You have plenty of ability and have only to do your duty

to the best of your power and you will be sure to get on. I hope that you will soon get removed to some appointment more suitable to you than Gya, for it must be a great disadvantage to you both in your work and comfort. I am sorry to hear that there has been a famine or at all events a scarcity in Lower Bengal and Orissa this year. I hope Birbhum has not suffered. One great safeguard against such things in Birbhum is the railroad running through it. We in England cannot suffer as you do in India, for the rules of demand and supply are so well known in Europe that whenever there is a scarcity in one country, it is soon supplied from another, for instance we had had a very bad cattle plague in England and hundreds and thousands of cattle have died ; but there have been a great importation which has supplied the place and here is no want of cattle much, though there has been a great expenditure of money. You must have seen there are great rumours of war on the continent of Europe, but I hope and trust that England will have nothing to do with it. As regards my own family, thank God we are all well. My eldest boy is now at school and is getting on very well. You remember Master Johnny I dare say, he is a very amiable boy but does take to his learning readily, I am sorry to say. We are still as you will see by the date of this, living in the country but we are shortly going to London for a week or two. I hope you and your family are well, and with my own and Mrs. Malet's very kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,
O. W. MALET.

HAYGRASS HOUSE NEAR TAUNTON,
6th August, 1868.

My dear Gutty Babu,

I thank you for your letter of the 23rd June which I got a few days back. Of course I do not expect you to write to me by return of post or indeed at any time that it is not convenient and you must not expect more from being at such a distance and what belongs to us and surrounds us being so very different, it is almost as if we were living in different worlds, and though we may be united, as I hope we always shall be, by bonds of mutual esteem, we have not very much to write about. I am very sorry to hear of the death of Babu Shamalananda. I remember him perfectly. He was a man much respected by all who knew him. He was not by any means an old man, so I fear his death must have an unexpected blow to all of you. Your aunt of course I never heard of. You will observe that I also use mourning paper. It is in consequence of the death of a brother of Mrs. Malet who was in the Queen's army as an officer. He was formerly in the 3rd Light Dragoons which you may perhaps recollect distinguished itself much in the Sikh war of, I think, 1846 or 1848. Poor man! he had complained of giddiness in the morning and went out for a ride on horseback, the next thing was that he was picked up nearly dead on the road. He had a concussion of the spine and died about 5 hours afterwards. He was a very nice man and was beloved by all who knew him. The sad accident happened at Kingstown, South Africa, where

he was barrackmaster. I was much rejoiced to hear that you have so good an exam. and you have, thereby, besides doing credit to yourself, done credit to me. If I see either E. or M., I will be sure speak a good word for you, but I think your greatest triumph is that by your own good conduct you have conquered the prejudice Mr. J. had against you. You have only got to go on as you have hitherto done and I have no doubt that you will rise to the highest post that you can hold. You will, I dare say, see by the papers that there is some talk of putting natives of India into the covenanted services; if so, and I have a chance of doing, I will recommend you for one, as I am sure you would do well. When you write next, tell me anything about Beerbhum and the people there. I have not heard of any one there since you left it. I have sent out several newspapers to the school there that had articles relating to India such as debates etc. but have not had a line. The last was I think about a year back from old Benoderam Sen, who, I hope is still alive. I also heard from Radhanath Ganguli who, of course you know, has retired. I must rely on you to tell all my old friends including Dwarkanath, Tumkin and others that I am well and often think of them, but I have nothing to write to them about, so they must excuse my doing so, but shall always be glad to hear of their welfare. Tell me how many boys attend the school now, and I hope, what I may call my scholars do credit to their selection. Thanks for what you say about the beads and with Mrs. Malet's kind regards,

I am, yours very sincerely,

O. W. MALET.

HAYGRASS HOUSE, TAUNTON,
27th March, 1869.

My Dear Durgagati,

I have not answered your last letter till now and you must excuse the long delay. I hope that by this time you have got to a more pleasant part of the country and one that suits you better. I have lately been on what is called the special jury at some assizes held in county town. They have what are called special juries to assess damages in England, and a very good plan it is, as it takes away all idea of partiality. What a dreadful famine you have in India, but I hope that through God's help, the sufferings of the poor people are less than they were. Sir C. Beadon and the Bengal Government generally are much blamed for thier tardiness but I think mufassil officers must have been most blamed, for I must say I never found the Government backward to do what was right when fully reported to them. Had not Lord C. snubbed it, there would have been a large subscription from England but since then, the people have been so much called on for subscriptions that I do not think much could be got just now, and besides, so many persons have lost money by the failure of the Agra Bank and other large mercantile concerns in England, there is not much money to spare for charity; for instance, we ourselves owing to these failures have had nearly half less income this year, 66-67, than we had in 65-66; and a very serious inconvenience it has been to us, as, of course, all our establishment has been set up on the footing that we were on, and we were

to make reductions which is not pleasant, and it also prevents our having any money to spare to you, say in charities, though we should much liked to have done so. I heard from B. T. last mail, he asked me for introduction to the Judge, Bankura, where it appears he is going, but surely, he must have others who are present in India who can give him a more influential introduction than I could. Will you tell him this if you correspond with him? The fact is that when in India, we in the Civil Service hold very high and influential appointments, if we happen to be men of family and standing in our own country and of high character, it gives us, while we are in India, some weight and importance, but as regards India that is all lost when we leave it. Tell me all you can about Birbhum, the school-master Binode Ram Singh, Dwarka Nath etc. etc. when you write, and with Mrs. Malet's kind remembrances,

I am, very sincerely yours,

O. W. MALET

HAYGRASS HOUSE.

Taunton 23rd Sept. 1869.

My Dear Durgagati,

I am glad indeed to hear that by your good conduct you have at last conquered the prejudices of Mr. J. It is indeed a triumph for you. He is one of those sort of men that will very probably, now he has seen that he was wrong in opinion, be able to help you on, but I must say that I think you are now in a position to make your own way without the patronage of private individuals. I have always found that in the Indian Service a man would, with

fair talent, honest and hard-working, if he takes care to let his work be known (and a good deal depends upon that) be sure to get on well. All we have to do is to work hard and conscientiously. I am rather sorry to hear that Golak is made an Assessor. It is a very invidious office. You do not tell me much about Birbhum. Is Dwarka Nath still at the Bar there or has he gone to Calcutta? I am sorry that J. has not got the High Court appointment but for my part I think it very hard on our native judicial service that these Judges should be at once selected from the Bar for the High Court. If I was the Government, I would make it in this way, Pleaders at the Bar, Munsifs, Sadar Amins, junior Sadar Amins, Additional Judge in the Mufassil and then High Court. Or perhaps it would be as well to pass over the Munsiff's and Sadar Amin's ranks in cases of High Court Pleaders. I find I have filled my paper, so with Mrs. Malet's very kind regards to yourselves and my own to you and to other old friends,

I am, very sincerely yours,
O. W. MALET.

HAYGRASS HOUSE,
Taunton 1870.

My Dear Gutty,

I merely write to say how grieved we are at your sad loss and how truly we both, Mrs. Malet and myself, sympathise with you. Time, with God's help, is the only cure for such a sad misfortune and almost the greatest, if not the very greatest, that could befall you.

What will you do with your poor children? With us it is a different thing. Here a man on losing his wife either marries again or if he has no female relative suitable to come and live in his house and take care of the children, gets some lady to come for a salary. She usually educates the children and takes care of the household expenses, sees to the hiring of servants etc. etc., but you, I suppose, cannot act in this way, I suppose you will send the children to some brother or near relation and they will, with the ladies of their family, take care of them. I should think that this would be preferable to leaving them to the care of servants. It must be a sad consolation to know that you did all you could. Man can do no more and I hope by the time this reaches you, that you have somewhat recovered yourself from the sad shock, and believe that I am, and Mrs. Malet also is

very sincerely yours,

O. W. MALET.

P. S. I hope all is well at Beerbhum. Remember me to all friends and tell me about the school when you write.

HAYGRASS HOUSE, TAUNTON.

May, 1870.

My dear Guppy,

I have not written to you or heard from you for a long time but you must not think that I have forgotten you because I have not written, for both Mrs. Malet and myself often think of the very happy time we passed

at Suri. As for the children, they have in a great measure forgotten all about it. I hope I shall get an answer to this and you must tell me all about the dear old place and how it is getting on, how many scholars there are in the school, how the vernacular school gets on, whether the new Courts are better than the old one, whether any new houses have been built, who are the officers of Government there now, whether Dwarka Nath got into the High Court and how he is getting on, whether old Benoderam Sen is still alive, what has become of the young friends, whether the Deo man ever got his rights or not, and all and every thing you can think of about the place and the people in it ; and now I will tell you about ourselves. First, I must tell you that in September next we are going to move from our present house and we have not yet determined where to go to ; we shall be sorry to leave, as having been here 6 years, we have got attached to the place and it suits us very well ; we shall, if we can, remain in the neighbourhood of Taunton, as it is a most convenient town with a first class Railway Station and the country round about is a very beautiful one, with plenty of trees which always ornament a landscape and it is very healthy and a good air. I am thankful to say I continue in good health. You will be glad to hear that Mrs. Malet is much better and stronger than when she first came home. She very seldom has an attack of asthma and when she does, it is not nearly so severe as it used to be, and she looks younger and is much stronger then she was at Beerbhum. My eldest girl Mabel is now grown up almost and is taller than her mother and people say

she is very handsome. She will be 17 her next birthday. About a fortnight ago we took her up to London to be presented to the Queen and she had the honour of kissing the Queen's hand. It is the custom in England for all young ladies of a certain rank and position in society to be presented in this way. She had a very handsome bracelet of gold and turquoise stone given her by her godmother to wear on the occasion. Mrs. Malet of course went with her and was also presented, as she had not had an opportunity since her marriage, though she had been so before. My eldest boy Frank, 16 next birthday, the one who was so ill with dysentery, is now in Germany with a private tutor. He is obliged to study German to fit him for a mercantile career for which we intend him. He is now a fine strong boy but I am sorry to say he is not fond of learning but more fond of sporting, riding and fishing and those sort of diversions. He will, if he works hard, have a chance of making a fortune. My next boy Johnny is still very like what he was when at Beerbhum. He is a clever, quick boy but very idle and does not like giving himself trouble about his lessons nor indeed about anything and is very fond of mischief. He is very provoking at times and with all this, he has a most sweet temper and is always ready to do anything kind and good-natured for anybody, and everybody likes him. He is a very handsome-featured boy and a stout little fellow but short in stature. Next comes Ethel; she is a fine well-grown girl but she is also very idle. Now comes the last, little Herbert. He is the best at his books of any one of the children and the most

promising, if he goes on as he is now in the way of learning. I think I shall try and get him into the Indian Civil Service but he is not of so sweet a disposition as his brother Johnny. He is a handsome child but is as yet too young to say much about him. We have a very good school here where we send these two boys to, the girls according to our English custom are educated at home under the care of their mother. I have told you all this long story about the children, dear Gutty, as I am sure you will be glad to hear of us, as we shall be glad to hear of you and your family. My poor old mother died about $1\frac{1}{2}$ years ago ; she was in her 91st year and kept her senses till the last. She was a great loss to all of us. Now you must write and tell me all particulars about yourself and family. I saw Mr. Montessor lately. He told me that you were getting on very well, and now good-bye, and with kind regards from Mrs. Malet,

I am, very sincerely yours,

O. W. MALET.

CHAPTER II.

DEPUTY MAGISTRATE AT GYA.

In August 1865, as already mentioned, he was appointed a Deputy Magistrate and a European friend of his congratulated him thus :—"I was very glad indeed to learn that you have been made a Deputy Magistrate. It was what you desired and I hope you will get on well and in due course be on the High Court Bench. With your knowledge of English and ability you have as good a chance as any one else." Shortly after joining his appointment, in January following, he was hauled over the coals for leaving the station during holidays without permission. He was asked to submit an explanation for his insubordinate conduct. His inborn independence and fearlessness had created many enemies in the higher official circle. His explanation was found to be not only insufficient but impertinent and he was asked to apologise, which he refused to do, with the result that his conduct was reported to the Commissioner of the Patna Division, Mr. Dalrymple. He at first naturally supported his immediate subordinate and insisted on an apology which, however, he still refused to submit. Matters then became so serious that he was ordered to come over to Bankipore to see the Commissioner at once. In the interview that followed the serious nature of his conduct was explained to him as well as the consequences that would inevitably result, if he refused to tender the apology. He was even

threatened with loss of his appointment but he stubbornly declined to submit and asserted that he had done nothing to deserve the humiliation. He was given three days' time to consider his position, failing which he was to be reported to Government for removal. The blood of the dark man was up and after spending the three days with a friend, he appeared before the Commissioner with the same answer. The effect, surprising as it appears, was like magic and the only reply that came was, "Would you like to be my personal assistant?" How noble and how grand! The times were different then and the Haileybury men were giants in body and mind. It is needless to add that the offer was welcomed with a feeling of gratitude which could not be expressed in words, the more so as efforts had been made in the meantime to transfer him to Chittagong which was then considered the penal station for delinquent officers. Thus he escaped a very serious fate and could enter on a career which was destined to be so successful.

CHAPTER III.

PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE COMMISSIONER OF THE PATNA DIVISION.

In May 1867 he joined his appointment at Bankipore, the Divisional headquarters and Mr. Toogood, his former master who had succeeded Mr. Malet thus wrote to him :—

“I am very glad to see your transfer and hope you will do well in the appointment under Mr. Dalrymple.” He also complimented him by saying that “he knew more of law and procedure than half the Deputy Magistrates going.”

It is rather curious to find that in 1868 he seems to have been anxious for a first-grade Munsiffship but could not get it under the rules (formerly such appointments were thus exchangeable). It shows, if it does anything, that he was the victim of a feeling of restlessness at the time, consequent on the treatment he had met with as a Deputy Magistrate. Prior to this in 1867, he had been offered the appointment of Dewan of the Cooch Behar State, which he had to decline for private reasons. His friends were also very much against his accepting the appointment. Foremost among them was Babu Kedar Nath Banerjee, the leader of the Muzafferpore Bar. He expressed his disapproval in very strong terms. In 1869 Mr. Dalrymple went on leave and Mr. R. P. Jenkins was appointed to act for him. Mr. Jenkins' appointment was to him as a red rag to a

bull. While Magistrate of Birbhum the subject of this memoir had occasion to incur his displeasure owing to his having taken an active part in opposing the transfer of the Hetampur estate to the Court of Wards. He took the side of the ward (the late Rajah Ramranjan Chackravarti, then a minor) who was his relation, the ward's aunt having married his maternal uncle Babu Kuladanda Mukerjee, who retired as a Sadar Amin. So great was the tension of feeling between this official and his subordinate that when the latter went to the railway station to receive him, he did not even speak to him but simply passed on without taking any notice of him.

- a This naturally had a very dampening effect on his young mind and a nature so sensitive as his, but, closely and diligently attentive to his duties, he went on with his work quietly and with unflagging energy, and without coming in contact with his superior except on paper. This state of things continued for about six months, after which he was one day suddenly summoned to appear before his master. He would not at first believe the orderly who respectfully told him "*Saheb Sálam Dia*," thinking that somebody else was wanted, but we can fancy his surprise when, on appearing before him he was accosted with the queer remark, "Babu, let by-gones be by-gones. You have pleased me much and it is now my turn to please you. Here is an Assessorship vacant. You can give it to anyhody you like." When the ice was broken in such an unexpected and pleasing way, his path was clear and Mr. Jenkins became one of his staunchest patrons. Mr. Dalrymple his former master wrote to him thus—"I am very glad to hear of your

prosperity. I am sure that eventually you will make a figure in life and, if you will excuse my saying so, I think it is fortunate for you to be serving under an officer who has a strong will and opinion of his own, like Mr. Jenkins." It was this officer who, when his assistant had gone on leave, wrote to him that he would be glad to see him back, for his *locum tenens* did not quite come up to the mark. In 1871 he got his promotion to a higher grade and another European friend of his wrote thus :—"I am very glad to see that you have got the promotion and hope it will carry you on for the present in good spirits, though you have been a long time getting it."

He held the appointment of P. A. to the Commissioner of the Patna Division for sixteen years till 1882. How he acquitted himself in that responsible post is shown by the numerous testimonials of the successive Commissioners, to all of whom he gave complete satisfaction, and the foremost of whom, Sir Steuart Colvin Bayley who subsequently rose to the Bengal *Masnad*, and became, on retirement, Vice-President of the India Council, bore repeated testimonies to the good services of his P. A. On the occasion of his temporary transfer to the Bengal Secretariat, in July 1872, as Head Assistant of the Judicial Department, Sir Steuart wrote as follows :—

"MY DEAR SIR,

As you are about to leave your present appointment, I write to say how much I regret losing your valuable assistance. Your ability and industry have greatly

lightened the pressure of work which, without such assistance, could scarcely have been got through, and your knowledge of civil law has rendered your assistance of special value in the numerous Court of Wards' suits that the Commissioner of this Division has to deal with.

I hope you will get on as well in the Bengal Office as you have done here. Though I have only been in charge of the Division for four months, I can speak with certainty of the high opinion my predecessor had of you, and the very complete confidence he placed in you.

Yours truly,
S. C. BAYLEY."

The letter undoubtedly speaks volumes for the genuine confidence he had in his assistant. In December 1872 he reverted to his substantive appointment at Bankipur and continued to serve there till 1882. On his return to Patna he received the following letter from Mr. Jenkins :—

BEACHLEY,
Chepstow, March 18, '73.

DEAR BABU,

I was very pleased to receive your note of 14th ultimo, by last mail, and to find that you had been doing so well since I left you. Under all the circumstances I believe you are better in your present post than in Calcutta, though your having gone down there to the L. G's office and having shown yourself well, have done you good and will perhaps lead to further promotion. I sincerely trust it may do so. It is naturally very gratifying to me to hear all you say in regard to the

feelings entertained by my many native friends towards me, and believe it is not a little flattering to any Englishman to find that his exertions in behalf of the charge entrusted to him have been appreciated. At any rate it shows that I have worked to good purpose. That it was my honest endeavour to do so, you know as well as most men. My future plans are unsettled and must remain so some months longer. My own wish is to return and labour amongst you all once more, but then I cannot deceive myself by thinking I am as good a man as I was, and perhaps it is my duty to allow other and better men now to succeed me. I have rather been seriously ill of late. Suppressed gout has attacked me severely and has affected my kidneys and heart a little, and though I am better, and hope soon to be quite well again, still it is the first real warning that I have had of declining health. If I am to continue to be subject to these attacks, I am better out of office. Then again, my own domestic matters require my attention at home, so what to do I know not. I like India, especially the Patna Division, where I have spent the best and happiest days my life in the East.

Yours faithfully,

R. P. JENKINS.

During this period he had the good fortune of earning remarks in appreciation of his services like these :—"Helped him (the Commr.) with marked industry, ability and judgment"; his assistance to him "had been invaluable"; and his "industry and zeal have never flagged."

CHAPTER IV.

BEHAR FAMINE AND VISIT OF H. R. H. THE PRINCE OF WALES.

During his incumbency Behar was visited by the worst of famines in 1873-74. The havoc it caused is still well-remembered. Since the days of Garstin, the architect, who in 1793 caused a huge granary to be erected in Bankipur still known as "Garstin's folly", to prevent famines by storing up food grains, so deeply impressed was he with the distressing effects of famine, no measures had been taken on such a grand scale by Government in Patna to meet the contingency ; and the management of the whole organization fell on the shoulders of the Commissioner of Patna or virtually on his Assistant, who had to do the most arduous and anxious work in that connection, in addition to the ordinary duties of his heavy office in the several departments. The nature of the task will be evident from the fact that he had, firstly, to carry on correspondence with numerous officers, both Civil and Military employed in the districts affected by the famine ; secondly, to post under the Commissioner's orders the very large number of officers deputed for the purpose. This entailed a difficult task involving careful judgment and discrimination of the capacity of the several officers. Thirdly, to supply them with advances and arrange for their journey,—there were not many railways and the modern means of easy communication at the time ;—

fourthly, to grant permanent advances to the transport and other officers, numbering 137 which involved transactions amounting to several *lacs* of rupees ; fifthly, to check and pass their bills and accounts involving an aggregate amount of about 90 *lacs* ; sixthly, to keep and check the accounts of grain purchased and issued for distribution in the affected area ; seventhly, to audit the final accounts with transport and District officers, large numbers of contractors and the Railway Company ; and eighthly, to attend to the miscellaneous calls from various officers for clerks, tents, boats etc. He, however, thanks to his indefatigable energy, proved equal to this Herculean task and his services were promptly brought to the notice of Government by Sir Steuart Bayley in the following terms :—"I strongly commend to notice my Personal Assistant Babu Durgagati Banerjee, whose work during my absence (on tour) has been exceptionally onerous and responsible, and of infinite assistance to me". This opinion was fully endorsed by Sir Richard Temple, the then Lt.-Governor of Bengal, by whom he was specially presented to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at the Public Durbar held at Bankipur in January 1876. The arrangements for the reception of H. R. H. and the Durbar were all carried out by him and his services were recognised by Sir Bartle Frere, as will appear from the following letter addressed to him by the late Private Secretary to the Lt.-Governor :—

"The Lt. Governor has been desired by Sir Bartle Frere to mention to you that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has been informed by His Honour of

your exertions in arranging for the reception at Bankipore which gave His Royal Highness so much satisfaction."

The Durbar was a great success and it was all that could be desired. The most difficult part of it was the arrangement of seats according to the precedence of the Durbaris, specially of the different noblemen of Behar who were all very keen about their rank. There were the Maharajas of Durbhanga, Dumraon, Hatwa, Bettiah, Tikari and the Rajahs of Muksudpur, Seohar etc. and not a single voice was raised in that connection by way of complaint and the arrangement was carried out smoothly.

After the termination of the famine operations, his services were prominently brought to the notice of Government for special promotion by Sir Steuart Bayley in the following letter :—

"As I am about to go on 14 months' furlough, after having had charge of this Division for nearly three and a half years, I venture, though not strictly according to rule, to bring prominently to the notice of Government the excellent service rendered throughout that period by my Personal Assistant, Babu Durgagati Banerjee.

If the size of my office and the amount of its correspondence be considered, it will be understood what a responsible and burdensome duty the mere daily routine of its supervision involves, but to Babu Durgagati I am indebted for something very much more than such routine supervision ; in the preparation of cases, in notes, and in drafts, his assistance has been that of a Secretary rather than of the ministerial head of an office,

and without such assistance, I should have frequently found it impossible to get through the work.

During the famine his labours were more onerous and scarcely less responsible than those of many Sub-Divisional Officers. Owing to my continual absence from Head Quarters, I had to trust to his hands a large share of responsible administrative work, and, in addition to the ability and unwearying industry with which he has always been credited, he showed in these duties a judgment and discretion which qualify him for even more important posts than he now holds. I venture to append a letter on this subject from Colonel Macgregor, much of whose work brought him into direct communication with Babu Durgagaty.

The Babu is now in the fifth grade of Deputy Magistrates. I found him in that grade when I came, and I am sorry to say that I still leave him in it. If marked ability and proved merit are allowed to have weight in the system of promotion of Deputy Magistrates, I venture to bring to the notice of Government these qualities of my Personal Assistant."

The letter of Colonel MacGregor (Director of the Transport Department), referred to in the above report ran thus :—

"Before leaving, I think it fitting that I should place on record my high sense of the courteous manner in which all communications with the Transport Department have been conducted by Mr. Bannerjee, your Personal Assistant ; especially I would notice the unwearying rapidity and alacrity with which he has always passed the accounts connected with my Department.

I hope you will not think this testimony out of place ; as I think that Mr. Bannerjee's efforts to prevent any friction have aided the success of our operations to a very considerable extent."

Sir Steuart was also pleased to place on record his opinion quoted below regarding Mr. J. F. K. Hewitt, who was then the Deputy Commissioner of Patna, and of his Personal Assistant, in these highly flattering terms : —

"The two officers employed directly under me, viz., Mr. Hewitt and Babu Durgagaty Banerjee, I do not attempt to classify. It is sufficient to say that I have been indebted in the highest degree for the unwearying assiduity and judgment with which they have both assisted me during a very trying time. They have both, in consequence of my continual absence, had a much larger share of responsible administration than it would have been in ordinary years proper for me to depute ; and if the ordinary administration has been carried on during the year with even tolerable punctuality and efficiency, it is to their labours more than to my direct supervision that a successful result is due."

Before leaving the Patna Commissionership, Sir Steuart was also pleased to record the following opinion in appreciation of his services :—

"Of my Personal Assistant, Babu Durgagati Banerjee, I need not say more than that he maintains his name for extraordinary power of work, which he performs with no less ability than minute attention, and I can only express, now that I am about to leave the Division, my very great obligation to him for his assistance. Any credit that I may have received for my administration

of the Division is, I am not ashamed to say, greatly owing to his most efficient co-operation." This encomium not only shows the greatness of the man on whom it was bestowed, but also that of the giver of it, whose heart is as great as his personality.

In December 1877, H. E. the Viceroy and Governor-General was pleased to award to him an Imperial Assemblage Silver Medal which was presented to him by Sir Ashley Eden, the then Lt. Governor of Bengal. In laying down the reins of the Bengal Satrapy in 1882, His Honor wrote the following letter :—

BELVEDERE,

April 17th, 1882.

My dear Durgagaty,

I am very sorry that it is out of my power to give you any promotion before I leave India, not because I do not appreciate all the good and laborious work which you have done in Behar, but because there are no vacancies in the higher grade to which I can promote you. You have now established a reputation for yourself and have the support of all the Commissioners under whom you have served, and I think that before long you must obtain a step. Sir Steuart Bayley strongly recommended you to my favourable notice, and I gave you promotion in 1880 in consequence of the high opinion recorded of you by successive Commissioners. I have now known you for nearly twenty years, and have watched your progress up the official ladder with great interest, and it would have given me great pleasure

to have helped you one further rung in it before leaving India, but it is now impossible.

With the best wishes for your future success,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
A. EDEN."

Sir John Edgar succeeded Sir Steuart and in turn was succeeded by Mr. F. M. Halliday, the father of Sir Frederick Halliday, the late Commissioner of Police, Calcutta. Both these officers recorded their appreciation of his services in very laudatory terms, as will appear from the following :—

"I have been hitherto prevented from writing a line to thank you for the very great assistance which I got from you while acting as Commissioner of Patna. I found your help extremely valuable, and I can assure you that I fully appreciated your ability and rare power of doing hard work. The weak state of your health during the last few months has been a subject of much regret to me, particularly as I feel that you must have suffered from your untiring devotion to your duties. I should be very glad if it were in the power of Government to reward your excellent services by promotion to a higher work and less harassing post than that of Assistant to the Commissioner of Patna"—Sir John Edgar.

"Baboo Durgagaty Banerjee has continued to perform the very onerous duties of his office with unceasing and conscientious discharge, and I am exceedingly

indebted to him for his invariably able assistance and excellent judgment in the conduct of all business connected with this heavy and important Division. It would be difficult to find a better Personal Assistant"—
Mr. F. M. Halliday.

Such good opinions are very rarely met with now-a-days.

CHAPTER V.

BEHARI vs. BENGALI CONTROVERSY ; TRANSFER.

In 1880 began the Behari vs. Bengali controversy, started by some malicious persons whose names need not be mentioned. It is the same all the world over—good work has always met with opposition and mean and envious persons are not wanting to cry down years of improvement and progress inaugurated by men of intellect whose rare powers of ability and administration are an eyesore to them. As a sequence, a few discontented and jealous people with the help of intriguing wire-pullers began a tirade of abuse against an outsider—a Bengali—whose deserved popularity had become too much for them to bear. Under the protection of the rights and privileges of the Press and with the help of sophistry, showers of abuse began to be thrown at the devoted head of the “Black Commissioner”, as he used to be known latterly. The abuse was not only received with indignation by the friends, and admirers whose name was legion, but also by another section of the Press, the opinions of which are given at the end of this Chapter. The consequence was that it was decided by Sir Rivers Thompson who had just then stepped into Belvedere and whose liking for the “Black Commissioner” was anything but warm, to transfer him from the place of his labours. It is not out of place to mention here that the subject of this memoir had the misfortune to incur his displeasure at Suri (Birbhum),

when the latter was the Judge there, for the same reasons that had led Mr. Jenkins to be annoyed with him, as already mentioned.

The selection of Mr. James Monroe, C. B. who was the Commissioner of the Presidency Division having fallen upon him, he was transferred to Calcutta as his Personal Assistant. Mr. Monroe's name was well-known and he was reported to be a very strict office-head. He was opposed to all philistinism and humbug. His vigorous administration of the District of Nadia is remembered to this day. He was a terror to *budmashes*, the race of which became extinct during his time. When the transfer was gazetted, some of his enemies were overjoyed, the more so as he was to be Personal Assistant of a Divisional Commissioner of Mr. Monroe's stamp. They gloated over his discomfiture of which they became confident, and one of them went out of his way to declare openly that the Personal Assistant was coming to the Presidency Division only to be "kicked out." Fortunately however, their predictions turned out to be a mare's nest, and once for all they turned out to be false prophets, as the subsequent events showed.

While such speculations were going on in the enemies' camp, we find the people of Behar vying with one another to do honor to one who had done so much for them. A full extract of the proceedings held in that connection is given below. Meetings and receptions were held all over the province by the leading and representative citizens and subscriptions were raised. The outcome was "the Durgagati Memorial Scholarship" which was made tenable at the Patna College.

Before joining the Presidency Commissioner's Office he went on leave, his health having failed owing to the heavy strain of official duties. He suffered from occasional vertigo and a general breakdown.

FAREWELL MEETINGS.

The following telegram appeared in the *Englishman* of the 18th November 1882 under the head of Special Telegrams :—

PUBLIC MEETING AT PATNA.

Bankipore, November 17.

A public meeting of the Native gentry of Patna and Bankipore, convened by Kazi Norool Hosain, Kuer Sookraj Bahadur, Rai Jai Kissen, Syed Ameer Hosain, Rai Kashi Prosad, Babu Balkissen, Moonshi Rajimuddin, Munshi Janki Sahai, Moulvi Khoda Buksh, Babu Kristo Chunder Ghose, Babu Nobin Chunder De, and Babu Baladeb Palit, was held to-day in the evening to mark their appreciation of the services of Babu Durgagati Banerji to Behar. The meeting was numerously attended ; Kazi Norool Hosain, Subordinate Judge of Patna, was in the chair. Kuer Sookhraj Bahadoor moved the first Resolution, that 'on the eve of Babu Durgagati's departure from Patna, the meeting deem it their duty to mark their appreciation of the services rendered by him to Behar. Moulvi Fazal Imam, Vice-Chairman of the Patna Municipality, moved the second resolution that before his departure, a public reception be given to Babu Durgagati. Moulvi Khodabuksh moved the third reso-

lution that a subscription list be opened to commemorate in a permanent form the services of Babu Durgagati.

The Behar Herald—Pursuant to a requisition signed by Kazi Nurul Hossin, Kuar Sukraj Bahadur, Rai Jai-kissen, Syed Amir Hossain, Rai Kashi Prasad, Babu Balkissen, Munshi Najimuddin, Munshi Janki Sahay, Moulvi Khodabuksh Khan, Babu Kristo Chandra Ghosh, Babu Nobin Chandra De, and Babu Baladeb Palit, a public meeting of the native gentry of Patna and Bankipore was held at 5 p. m. on Friday, the 17th November 1882, at the premises of the Bankipore Training Institution to consider the best way of showing the appreciation by the native public of the services rendered by Babu Durgagati Banerji to Behar. The meeting was numerously attended.

Kazi Nurul Hossein, Khan Bahadur, Sub-Judge took the chair, and after reading the requisition, opened the meeting with a short speech as to its object.

He was followed by Kuar Sukraj Bahadur, Zemindar, Moulvi Fuzul Imam, Vice-Chairman of the Patna Municipality, and Moulvi Khodabuksh Khan, Pleader, who respectively proposed the following Resolutions:—

First Resolution.

That this meeting, while congratulating Babu Durgagati Banerji on his appointment as Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of the Presidency Division, feel deep regret at his coming departure from this Province, with which he was connected for the last 17 years, and that they deem it their duty to mark their appreciation of the services rendered by him to Behar.

Second Resolution.

That previous to the departure of Babu Durgagati Banerji from Patna, a public reception be given to him and the following gentlemen form themselves into a committee to arrange for such public reception :—

Kazi Nurul Hossein, Khan Bahadur.

Kuar Sookraj Bahadur.

Rai Jai Kissen.

Syed Amir Hossein Khan.

Babu Balkissen.

Rai Kashi Prosad.

Moulvi Najimuddin.

„ Fazlar Rahman,

„ Fazal Imam.

„ Khoda Buksh Khan.

Munshi Janki Sahay.

Babu Kristo Chunder Ghosh.

„ Nobin Chandra De.

„ Baladeb Palit.

„ Shama Charan Banerji.

„ Deo Nath Sahay.

Moulvi Jelaluddin.

„ Abdul Jabbar.

„ Kazi Reza Hossein.

Rai Jaikissen	} To be Secretaries to the Reception Committee.
Moulvi Khodabaksh Khan	

Third Resolution.

That this meeting resolves to commemorate the services of Babu Durgagati Banerjee to Behar in a permanent form, and that with this view they resolve that a

subscription list be opened, and the gentlemen named below form themselves into a Committee with power to add to their number, to collect subscriptions, to determine the shape the memorial is to take after the subscriptions have been collected, and generally to carry out the object of this resolution.

Kazi Nurul Hossein, Khan Bahadur, Kuar Sukraj Bahadur, Rai Jaikissen, Rai Jai Prokash Lall Bahadur, Babu Balkissen, Munshi Najimuddin, Babu Harbans Sahay, Moulvi Khodabuksh Khan, Babu Bhubaneswar Dutt, Babu Baladeb Palit, Babu Nobin Chandra De, Babu Kristo Chandra Ghosh.

Babu Harbans Sahay	} To be Joint Secretaries.
Moulvi Khodabaksh Khan	

The President and the movers spoke in highly eulogistic terms of the numerous good acts done by Babu Durgaguti Banerji in Behar during the long period for which he had been connected with the Province, making special mention of the able services rendered by him in his official capacity during the Famine, as the Secretary to the Behar Industrial School, and as a Municipal Commissioner.

The resolutions were seconded respectively by Mir Mahomed Yahia, Babu Kristo Chandra Ghosh and Moulvi Ali Allum, and were carried with acclamation.

A vote of thanks being proposed to the chair by Babu Baladeb, the meeting broke up after six.

The following telegram was published in the *Englishman* of the 30th November 1882 and other papers :—

Bankipore ; November 29th, 1882.

A grand public reception was given to Babu Durgaguti Banerji, late Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of Patna, yesterday evening. All the Behar districts were well represented. Babu Ambica Prasad Sinha of Tikari, Sital Prasad, B. L., Vakil of Gya, the Hon'ble Harbans Sahai, Babus Mohesanand, Chaturbhuj Sahai of Shahabad, Moulvi Makdum Hossein, Mr. Shurfuddin, Barrister, Chapra, some scions of the Gadri family, Rai Jai Kissen, Moulvi Jelaluddin, Munshi Nazimuddin and several others from Patna were present. Numerous letters of sympathy from the outlying districts, from persons unavoidably absent, were received. Munshi Nazimuddin, Moulvi Makdum Hossein, Moulvi Jelaluddin, Rai Jai Kissen, Badshah Nawab of Gadri family, Babus Mohesanund, Sital Prasad, Shama Churn Banerji and Moulvi Khoda Buksh spoke with much feeling and in highly eulogistic terms of the Babu. The Babu replied in fitting terms. The Babu was escorted to the place of reception by two members of the Reception Committee. The meeting which was very crowded broke up after the distribution of *pan* and *ettar*.

The Behar Herald—A grand public reception was given to Babu Durgaguti Banerji on the evening of the 28th November 1882 at the premises of the "Rosy Bower," the residence of Kazi Norool Hossein, Khan Bahadur, Sub-Judge, Patna, at Subzibag in Bankipore. Besides the gentlemen forming the Committee and the Secretaries, we noticed among others the following gentlemen :—Rai Joy Kissen, Mehdi Nawab, Babus Ram Narayan, Jadu Rai, Moulvi Jelaluddin, Badsha

Nawab, Moulvi Tafazul Hossein, Patna ; Babus Ambika Prasad, Kokil Chand, Ram Charan Pershad, Nourangi Lall, Sital Prosad, Deokinandan, Debi Pershad, Gya ; the Hon'ble Hurbans Sahai, Babus Chatoorbhooj Sahai, Maheshanand, Arrah ; Moulvi Abdul Jubbar, Babus Guru Prosad Sen, Dhonesh Chandra Rai, Mehdni Prosad, Kristo Chandra Ghosh, Mr. Shurfuddin, Barrister, Babus Baladeb Palit, Shama Charan Banerji, Sheo Nandan Lal, Manmatha Kumar Bose, Nanda Lal Ghosh, Ram Chandra Gupta, Sib Chandra Bose, Moulvi Husmut Hossein, Babu Bhoobaneswar Dutta, Moulvi Kutubuddin, Babus Purnendu Narayan Singh, Nobin Chandra Mitra, Bepin Behari Bose, Tarini Charan Mukherji, Moulvi Nasiruddin.

A deputation consisting of two members of the Reception Committee went over to Babu Durgagati's place and accompanied him to the place of reception. At the entrance to the reception hall, which was tastefully decorated and illuminated, he was received by the members of the Reception Committee—Nujimuddin, Patna, Hurbun Sahai, Shahabad, Mukdum Hossein, Chupra, Khodabuksh Khan, Patna, Sital Pershad, Gya, Baldeo Palit—on behalf of the Bengali Community, Patna. Some of the members of the Reception Committee on behalf of the Native public expressed their appreciation of the Babu's services to Behar and their regret at his coming departure from the Province.

Most eloquent speeches were delivered by Moulvi Najimuddin, Moulvi Jelaluddin, Babu Maheshanand and three or four other gentlemen, at the conclusion of which the Secretary, Moulvi Khoda Baksh Khan, laid

before the meeting letters received from several respectable gentlemen from Patna, Gya and other places, expressing their regret at being unavoidably prevented from attending. Moulvi Khoda Baksh wound up with a feeling allusion to the high qualities which distinguished Babu Durgagati both in his public and private life. The lengthiness of the speeches prevents our giving a full report of them in this issue. All the speakers spoke in terms of the highest praise of the public services and the private virtues of Babu Durgagati.

We can only make space for the following translation of Munshi Najimuddin's speech :—

"Gentlemen, I have the greatest pleasure to behold such a grand, and respectable gathering of the gentry of this town to say farewell to an officer who has, during a long stay of over seventeen years in this Division, made himself popular throughout the province of Behar by his affable and obliging manners and also by his unblemished official career. Although I have been leading a retired life throughout the brilliant career of Babu Durgagati Banerjee as 1st Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of Patna, yet I can give instances on good authority of how he has made himself distinguished for his marked abilities among his compeers. Among many such instances I will just revert to only one instance for shortness of time, to show in what high estimation he is held by his equals. About a couple of years ago I remember once a distinguished officer of long standing in the course of conversation told me that he never came across a more competent, energetic and conscientious officer than Babu Durgagati Banerjea. It is

a fact known to every one that posts and situations are in themselves nothing but they borrow light from persons that hold them and that our guest of this evening has fully verified it by his good example, is a fact that needs no illustration. His familiarly mixing with all classes of society has made him fully acquainted with the province, thus rendering him an invaluable assistant in the administration of this important province of Behar. And it is on account of such qualifications that he has so ably succeeded in maintaining such a high character among his superiors in office and in acquiring a just and true estimation in the eyes of the public. Gentlemen, we have a twofold duty to perform this evening,—one is to congratulate our guest on the due appreciation by Government of his services, by placing him in a Division where only the ablest and the most experienced hands are required, and our second duty is to bid farewell to our esteemed friend and at the same time to express our regret in not only losing his services as an assistant to our Commissioner but mostly in missing his presence from amongst us.

“Before I close, I am confident every one here is with me in wishing our friend a most brilliant career, long life and prosperity”.

Moulvi Jelaluddin spoke with his usual eloquence, and his speech evoked repeated applause from the audience.

Babu Durgagati gave a short and extremely pathetic reply. He said :—

I beg to tender my heart-felt thanks to you all for the very kind reception you have given me on the eve of my departure from here, and for the kindly sentiments you

have just expressed towards me. The honor you have done me to-night is really too great for a man of my insignificant position ; and I prize it the more as it emanates from so many distinguished, eminent and representative men of this great province in which I have worked so long and in which I have spent the best portion of my life. I could never dream that such an honor was in store for me, and I am conscious that I do not deserve it. I cannot however conceal from you the pride I feel in receiving it from you, gentlemen, the *elite* of Behar. I can only offer you my grateful thanks for your kindness, which I need hardly assure you, will ever remain imprinted on the tablet of my memory, You have made kind allusion to my public services in Behar. But, gentlemen, I do not claim any credit for the same. It is the duty of every officer to serve Government faithfully ; and if my humble services have met with your approbation, I consider myself more than amply rewarded. Parting is, gentlemen, always painful. In my case it is doubly so. Associated as I have been with you so long and kind as you have been to me, I feel overpowered by the weight of your kindness. Thanking you again for your kind wishes, I beg to bid you all good-bye.

After the distribution of *pan* and *attar*, the meeting broke up.

The Behar Herald—A similar demonstration was held at Arrah on the night of the 5th November 1882, of which the following is an account :—

Arrah was the scene of an unprecedented movement last night. There was a large gathering of the gentry

and aristocracy of the station at the house of the well-known Babu Hurbuns Sahai, Pleader, to do honor to the Babu. The scene was grand and imposing. The house in which the assembly sat was tastefully decorated and illuminated. The gentry of the town, to mark their sense of gratitude to the Babu for his services to the public, and in recognition of his personal qualities, gave a farewell public dinner and *nautch* in honor of the departing Babu. The assembly consisted among others of Rai Dewan Jai Perkash Lall Bahadur of Doomraon, Babu Baijnath Sahai, a leading Zemindar and Municipal Commissioner, Babu Bhagwan Dass, also a Municipal Commissioner, Babu Bolac Chand, Babu Soorooj Coomar, a Zemindar, Babu Lachmi Narayan and Raghunath Pershad, rich bankers, and many other gentlemen of great position. The official element was also well represented. Almost all the native officials were present. The Mahomedans too did not fail to join their Hindu brethren on the occasion. In short, the *élite* of the town had met together to bear testimony to the high qualities of the said Babu. The entertainment proved a perfect success and everything went on smoothly and with great *eclat*. Post-prandial speeches were made. Babu Hurbuns Sahai with his usual eloquence made a very feeling speech in Hindustani and paid fitting compliments to the Babu who gave a suitable reply in English. Babu Hurbuns Sahai spoke in Hindustani as the majority of the audience were innocent of English, and Babu Durgagati not finding himself equal to the occasion spoke in English, and the substance of the latter's speech was translated into Hindustani. Another

speech followed the above two—Babu Bolac Chand, Judge of the Small Cause Court of Bhagulpore and Monghyr, in a short but sensible speech impressed upon the people that the official career of the departing Babu was free from blemishes and that he discharged his public duties honestly and impartially and had won the good will of all. This brought the entertainment to a close, when the Babu took leave of, and wished good-bye to, all present.

“Reports of the speeches made by Babu Hurbuns Sahai, Babu Bolac Chand and Babu Durgagati Banerjee :

Babu Hurbuns said :—“Gentlemen, the occasion which has brought us together this evening is well known to you all. It would be unbecoming on my part to let it pass without uttering a few words in acknowledgment of the personal qualities and the great and valuable services rendered by our esteemed friend, Babu Durgagati Banerji. He has been, as you are perfectly aware, amidst us for nearly sixteen years. Suavity of manners, a genial disposition and solicitude for the welfare of the province constitute a rare combination of virtues in our illustrious friend. These noble virtues cannot but challenge our admiration. They have secured him a large circle of friends and endeared him to many families. The official side of the picture, gentlemen, is none the less bright. Those that know him intimately will bear me out. It has been a matter of deep regret to us to find that our friend has of late been made the subject of most uncharitable and hostile criticism, but to an unprejudiced eye his services to the public stand out in full relief as brilliant and unassailable.

The aspersions cast upon his personal character were dictated by ill-feeling and personal grudge. It is but fair to say that they were entirely groundless and unjust. He, Babu Durgagati, has been a great friend to us in helping us to understand and assert our rights and privileges and we have received his sympathy in every way. Gentlemen, we are going to take leave of, and bid farewell to, such a friend. His transfer to another district has caused deep sorrow to us all. The separation from him is painful of course, but it is a great consolation to us to think that he goes to a better place where his rare qualities will shine all the brighter. The place he is now going to fill will, we daresay, prove a stepping stone to higher appointments which his brilliant services so richly deserve. It is with mingled feelings of pleasure and pain that we take leave of our friend, We pray that he may live long and continue to be as useful as he has always hitherto been to his countrymen".

Babu Bolac Chand said :—"Gentlemen, Babu Hurmans Sahai has expressed the sense of the whole assembly in stating that the hostile criticism of Babu Durgagati's personal character owes its origin to personal grudge and ill-feeling. I quite agree with him when he says that the imputations against our friend have been destitute of foundation. Those that know him well can observe the impropriety of such imputations. Our friend has worked honestly, zealously and energetically and he deserves to be thanked for the valuable services he has rendered to the public during the course of his official career in Behar. He was kind to his subordinates

and mixed freely with the people. All his friends are sorry to part with him and in wishing him good-bye, I pray that he may have a long, happy and prosperous life to live”.

Babu Durgagati said : “Gentlemen, I cannot find words to express to you adequately my thanks for the great honor you have so kindly done me to-night, and the kind sentiments you have been so good as to express for my humble self. To one placed in my present position, it is a most difficult task to give full vent to my feelings—I can only say that it would be simply heart-rending to me to part with so many kind and valuable friends. I can assure you, gentlemen, that I will always value your friendship wherever I may be, and that I will always remember with gratitude the kind feelings just expressed. I cannot pretend to possess the qualities which you so kindly ascribe to me ; and I must admit that I do not deserve the compliments bestowed upon me by you. But though I feel that I am not deserving of them, it is a source of pride to me to receive such testimony from such highly educated and enlightened representative men of Behar. I may be permitted to say that I have always taken a great interest in your affairs, and have always sympathised with you. I wish I could speak as eloquently as my friend, Babu Hurbuns. But I do not think you expect any speech from one who is overpowered with feelings. It is now my painful and heart-rending duty to bid you all farewell”.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

The Indigo Planter's Gazette.—“Babu Durgagati Banerjea has been receiving a regular ovation at Banki-

pore—on his transfer from that District. The public enthusiasm could not have been called forth for a more fitting object, as Patna, and Behar in general, owes a great deal to this liberal-minded Bengalee gentleman.”

The Bengalee.—“Behar has just bade adieu, amid many regrets, to a very worthy man who has done much good service to that Province. Babu Durgagati Banerjea, late Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of the Patna Division, has recently been transferred to the Presidency Division in the same capacity. After having been connected with Behar for nearly twenty years, this distinguished officer has left that Province, and there was, on all sides, as indeed might have been expected, a unanimous outburst of gratitude and good will towards the Personal Assistant. Meetings of the Native gentry and nobility have been held at Arrah and again at Bankipore to honour one who so richly deserves to be honoured. The meeting at Bankipore was a truly representative one, and it afforded a signal illustration of the truth that between Bengalees and Beharees there is no ill-will, but that if any does exist, it has been due to the malicious arts of intriguers who seem to think that it is wise statesmanship to strengthen the hands of Government by creating dissensions between the different sections of the Indian community. It is not upon our weakness, as we have more than once remarked, but rather upon our strength and our union, will depend the greatness, and indeed the permanence, of British rule. By honouring Babu Durgagati Banerjea in the way that

they have done, the people of Behar have publicly declared that they bear no ill-will to their Bengalee neighbours, and that they are ready to appreciate, and to feel grateful for, any little service which any native of Bengal may render to them. Apart from the purely personal aspect of the question, these demonstrations are gratifying to us from the lesson which they teach and which, we hope, will not be lost upon all those whom it concerns.

The Hindu Patriot — "What is a loss to Patna is a gain to the Presidency."

* * * *

"Some of the representative men of Behar entertained Babu Durgagaty Banerjea, late Personal Assistant to the Patna Commissioner, at a public dinner, at Arrah, at which some post-prandial speeches eulogizing the personal qualities and public services of the Babu, were delivered. Nothing could be a better refutation of the calumnies which some interested and malicious agitators had spread against him, than this quiet social demonstration."

* * * *

"What do these demonstrations shew? Babu Durgagaty is no longer in power in Behar, and yet the leading men of Behar are honoring him as if he were their governor. Surely they would not do all this for one, whom they did not like."

The Amrita Bazar Patrika :—"It has given us great satisfaction to find that Babu Durgagati Banerjee, Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of Patna, has been so heartily feted by the *elite* of Behar. Some time ago certain mischievous persons raised a cry against him, no doubt with the evil desire of fostering race antipathy between Beharis and the Bengalees. So the act of the native representative gentlemen of Behar is not only a fitting reward to the high merits of Babu Durgaguti, but also serves to frustrate the evil intentions of those who would seek to create ill-feelings between the two provinces."

The Behar Herald—"We understand that Mr. Monro, the present able and energetic Commissioner of the Presidency Division, offered the post of his Senior Personal Assistant to Babu Durgagaty Banerjee, Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of the Patna Division, and that the latter has accepted the offer. We cannot sufficiently congratulate the Government and Mr. Monro on the selection so made by him and approved also, as we hear, by the Government of Bengal. Most deeply as Behar must regret this loss, we should be extremely selfish in wishing him to stay here while his appointment to the most important Commissionership in the Bengal Presidency should in his case, most undoubtedly, as it has proved in the case of several others with no claims at all equal to his, be, as we hope and presume, the stepping stone to still higher honors and more substantial and special recognition at the hands of

Government of the many good and valuable services rendered by him during a long course of years. We have had frequent occasions to mark the exceptionally high terms in which these services have been invariably recognised and appreciated by Government ; and several times has his name been mentioned in connection with the filling up of special appointments such as the Managership of the Cooch Behar Raj, the Calcutta Collectorship, a Calcutta Small Causes Court Judgeship ; and quite recently the post of Inspectorship of Registration was offered him by Government, but he was compelled to refuse it owing to advanced age and his bad state of health at the time. To our regret his claims have in the former instances been allowed to be ultimately superseded, as the claims of qualified natives usually are, when they clash with the interests of race or other similar considerations influencing official favouritism in this country. He will carry with him, if he goes from Behar, a reputation which envy and malice cannot approach, and the good wishes of all who know him."

The Reis and Rayyet—"The two Nodes of the moon or, as they are commonly called, the Dragon's Head and the Dragon's Tail, serve a peculiarly infamous purpose in the economy of the celestial sphere. Their only business is periodically to darken the luminaries,—Dragon's Head swallowing them, as the saying goes, and the malignant Tail sympathetically keeping it in countenance. Such would seem to be the tender attentions with which Baboo Durgagati Banerjea,

Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of Patna, is now unhappily pursued. His character is being blackened by two human nodes, the inspirer and the writer of certain slanderous articles in an obscure print published at Bankipore. They have both been spotted, and we purpose taking an early opportunity of exposing their antecedents in order to enable the public to determine what value should be attached to their gratuitous statements, in reference to a public officer deservedly esteemed for his integrity and administrative ability.

“We can never forgive the active part which, we understand, Babu Durgagati took in promoting an unmerited ovation to a late Lieutenant Governor; but we are nevertheless free to acknowledge the sterling worth and eminent services of the man. When we compare the Behar of the Mutinies with the Behar of the present day, we notice remarkable signs of improvement in every direction—social, political, and material—which we have no hesitation in indentifying as the work, in no small degree, of this zealous officer. We have not forgotten the deep political significance that attached to the appointment of a Mahomedan gentleman from Bengal,—a Bengali to the backbone both by instinct and training—to be the Personal Assistant to Mr. Samuells, when in those stormy times the latter was appointed to replace Mr. Tayler in the Commissionership of Patna. The same policy has since been pursued without a break in its continuity; and who that has a vivid recollection of the past will feel at all disposed to question its practical wisdom? It is with no unfriendly spirit that we refer to these matters.

Our object is merely to shew that if the Boeotia of India and the nest of Wahabeeism in the Lower Provinces is now an acknowledged centre of education, of social progress, and political activity, the country is greatly indebted for this result to the labors of Babu Durgaguti Banerjee and the small colony of Bengalis in the province. We have reason to believe that the Babu loves the Beharis with more than a brother's love, and to this love, it is well known, he has sacrificed better official positions, alive only to the interests of the people among whom he has worked for a period of sixteen years. He has mixed so much with them, and so sympathetically, as to be indentified with them, a trifle more perhaps than is altogether good for him. We believe some of his Bengali compatriots complain, though perhaps that is one of the very causes of his popularity with the inhabitants of his adopted province, that he is of Behar, Behari. Successive superiors have borne high testimony to his ability and singleness of purpose, and we incline to think that the Beharis themselves love and esteem him as a sincere friend and benefactor. The writer of the present article happened to stay at Bankipore for a few days during the Patna Famine, and he was then struck with the admiration and warm regard which the Personal Assistant's unwearied efforts to organise effective measures of relief in loyal subordination to his chief, evoked from a heavily afflicted people. That such a man should command an extensive influence, expecially when that influence has been exercised for the benefit of the people, is but a matter of course, and it is equally a matter of course

that he should provoke the envy and malice of the base who, like the man who ostracised Aristides, cannot bear to hear a good and worthy man universally praised. They, of course, do after their kind. Merit and virtue are assailed by them with rancorous hatred, calumny and falsehood being their only weapons of attack; but though it is generally best to treat such attacks with contemptuous silence, it is sometimes desirable in the interests of society to hunt down the vile slanderers. This is the reason why we have been induced to notice the Bankipore skunk, and we truly hope that our fellow-countrymen in Behar will in a body come forward to vindicate the character of a public officer who has been so grossly maligned in their midst, but who deserves, more than any other officer that we know, the heartfelt gratitude of the Beharis. A cock crowing on a dunghill is no doubt a brave sight to its harem of hens and brood of chickens, but we know that that is the creature's peculiar way of expressing a chuckle when it happens to find its grub. •

“During the invasion of Lunka by the illustrious Rama, his mighty adversary Ravana is said to have observed that he could stand the invectives and opposition of gods and men, but not the grins and grimaces of the tailed hordes of Kichkindha. Some such feeling, we can well understand, may fill the mind of Baboo Durgagati at the foul attacks of his unscrupulous traducers; for it is just possible that capable as they are of mischief, they can, by their reprehensible course, neutralise the good already effected in the province and arrest its onward progress in the race of civilization and en-

lightenment. The avowed object of the present agitation is to secure the transfer of the Babu from Behar—with what sordid motives it is not difficult to divine—but it must be remembered that a greater misfortune could hardly befall the Beharis than his removal from the province at the present moment. The generous policy of Lord Ripon's Government in conferring on the people of India the boon of self-government imperatively requires that the most experienced public officer possessing the greatest local knowledge should be entrusted with the duty of giving effect to the wishes of the Supreme Government. It would be hardly possible, we think, to get a better man for the purpose in Behar than this deservedly popular officer."

The Indian Mirror—"We are sorry to be obliged to observe that a Bankipore paper, representing the views and advocating the interests of this clique, has been making it a point to kindle into a white heat the animosity it had stirred up in the Beharis towards the Bengalis. To act thus is a clear abnegation of the solemn duties of journalism. Instead of creating bad blood between races who are really akin to each other, the local Press in Behar would be more fittingly employed in discussing and solving questions affecting the moral, social, material, and political advancement of the people of that Province. It should fix a steady eye on the working of the social, industrial, and administrative systems with a view to detecting and exposing every abuse. It should denounce official wrong-doings,

which are probably more common in Behar than in Bengal. Thus only will the local Press be feared and respected, when it is found to fulfil honestly its most important functions as the champion of truth, morality and justice, as the harbinger of unity, peace and progress.

“With so many titled Chiefs of ancient lineage, high rank, and vast wealth in Behar, and with every indication of growing prosperity in every part of the Province, the future prospects of the Beharis are unmistakably glorious, if only they persist steadfastly and straight in their onward course. Behar can now boast of an Association like the British Indian Association, with its own special organ. Some of its Chiefs are well educated, intelligent, and public-spirited. In fact, the local Landholders’ Association have learned so much from their Bengali brothers to value their political rights that, at a recent meeting of that body, they passed a resolution to arrange for the deputation of a delegate to England to represent their views on the Rent Bill, now on the legislative anvil. A lustre of years back, such a step from Behar would have gone beyond the range of the wildest dream.

“In connection with the present controversy between Bengalis and Beharis, we are pained to observe that a personal element has been imported into it, and that a worthy Bengali gentleman has been singled out as the object of what we may rightly call, grossly libellous attacks by a local journal, which, we have yet to learn, is a proper or correct representative of real Behari feeling. So far as our personal knowledge extends, this gentle-

man, Babu Durgagati Banerjea, has done more than any person or persons, whom we are aware of, for the advancement of Behar. It is only people who know him intimately, who know the value and worth of the man. As regards his services to Behar, they are, in our opinion, fully deserving of marked recognition at the hands of the Government. Successive Commissioners of the Patna Division have borne unequivocal testimony to his exceptional merits ; but it is quite in the nature of things that the strict and conscientious manner, in which he has always discharged his responsible duties, has incurred for him the resentment and even enmity, or perhaps, the jealousy, of some interested persons, whose selfish aims may have been thwarted through his influence or representations. Babu Durgagati Banerjea has long been recognised as among the most loyal, able and hard-working public servants of his class, and it will be scant encouragement to other officers of the same stamp, if the present Lieutenant-Governor, who is noted for his strong sense of justice, fails or neglects to set the mark of his approbation on his long and meritorious services. No party feeling should be allowed to detract from his merits, acknowledged by men who have enjoyed the amplest opportunities of judging his abilities and his character. The lot of Government servants is hard enough, especially of men holding the responsible position, filled by Babu Durgagati Banerjea. We know of Government servants who have actually been killed by hard work in the interests of Government ; they have died broken-hearted, through the absence of a due recognition of services, rendered at the sacrifice of health

and strength. We trust that under the rule of such a Viceroy as Lord Ripon and such a Lieutenant-Governor as Mr. Rivers Thompson, such cases will not be allowed to occur".

The Behar Herald—"We are glad to announce that the Durgagati Memorial Fund Committee have determined to give a suitable shape to the memorial. We understand that the subscriptions already amount to over Rs. 2,500/- which the Committee propose to invest in Government Promissory Notes, the interest being devoted to the foundation of a scholarship to be awarded every other year to the student from the local Collegiate School who passes best but fails to obtain one of the Junior Scholarships awarded by Government. With this object a communication will be shortly addressed to the Director of Public Instruction".

The Hindu Patriot's remarks on the above—"It affords us much satisfaction to observe that the movement to commemorate the connection of Babu Durgagati Banerjea with the administration of Behar is a *fait accompli*".

The Englishman's remarks on the same: "This testifies to the popularity of the late Personal Assistant to the Commissioner".

The Indian Mirror on the same: "The *Behar Herald* announces that the Durgagati Memorial Fund Committee have determined to give a suitable shape to the memorial.

"Behar owes a good deal to Babu Durgagati Banerjea. There are few who have done so much for

that Province. It seldom falls to the lot of a member of the Uncovenanted Service to be so greatly honored. This puts it beyond doubt that the value of the services of Babu Durgagati Banerjea in Behar, is really appreciated by the people there. The wonder is that Government has not, up to this time, done anything to recognise the merits of such an unquestionably able and valued officer as Babu Durgagati Banerjee".

How his friends felt his absence from Patna will be evident from the two following letters of his fast friends, Nawab Abdul Jubbar and Babu Kedarnath Banerjea :

Bankipore 22nd January 1883.

My dear Durgagaty,

Your absence has caused a gap in our social circle not easy to fill up.

Yours sincerely,
ABDUL JUBBAR.

Muzafarpore, Tirhut, 4th Novr. 1882.

My dearest and sweetest brother,

While most heartily congratulating you on your appointment as first Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of the Presidency Division I must confess to a great regret which I feel at this very happy event. This appointment will take you from a place of which you are the most valuable ornament. You are the pride of the place and you really deserve to be so. What an inestimable prestige the Bengalis have acquired in Behar through you. It is no flattery, my dear, when I say that Behar will suffer a very great loss by this

transfer, which you have so richly merited by your rare abilities. I sincerely hope that you carry to your new field of work renovated health and vigour and that you will earn there for yourself the same name and fame which you most deservedly enjoyed in Behar, and of which all your friends are so proud.

Yours most affectionately,
KEDAR NATH BANERJEA.

CHAPTER VI.

P. A. TO COMMISSIONER OF PRESIDENCY DIVISION, AND MEMBER OF SALARIES COMMISSION.

On the expiry of his leave he joined his appointment in December 1882. The Commissioner's Office was then located at Alipur from where it was removed to No. 14, Hare Street in 1887. He took up his residence at No. 10, St. James' Square—a big commodious house at the back of the premises of the Church of Scotland Mission, known as "Miss Pigot's School." Mr. Monro retired in 1884 to take up the appointment of the Commissioner of Police of London. He was succeeded by Mr. A. Smith, who held very high opinions of his Personal Assistant and bore repeated testimonies to his good services.

Be it said to the credit of Sir Rivers Thompson, who was not slow to recognise and appreciate real merit, that he soon changed his opinion of the officer whom he had transferred without any reasonable cause. So favourably impressed was he with the good work done, that in 1884 he appointed him a member of the Salaries Commission, with Messrs. J. Beames and W. H. Grimley of the Civil Service. Sir Steuart Bayley and Mr. Monro congratulated him in the following terms :—

103 Victoria Street, S. W.
London, 7th May, 1885.

My dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge your letter of 31st March and to congratulate you on your appointment to be a mem-

ber of the important commission to which you refer. Your long and varied experience with regard to the subject of the labours of the Commission must render your services specially valuable and I am sure that a better representative could not have been chosen. * *

Yours truly,
J. MONRO.

Simla, 13 May.

My dear Sir,

I am glad to hear of your being appointed to the Special Commission on Ministerial officers and am glad that it brings with it a substantial increase of remuneration. Your experience and capacity on office organization cannot fail to be useful on such a duty. * * *

Yours very truly,
S. C. BAYLEY.

On completion of the work he received the thanks of Government. His note of dissent quoted at the end of this Chapter is still a landmark of independence of opinion and judgment. He said what he meant and *never* flinched, though at one time he was threatened with being "handed up" to Government for daring to differ from his colleagues. His steady independence carried him through.

On the termination of his labours, he was offered the now defunct post of Assistant Secretary in the Bengal Secretariat, which, however, he had to decline for private reasons, though the appointment was a much coveted one.

NOTE OF DISSENT.

It is with extreme diffidence that I write this note of dissent. I feel deeply the weight of the opinion expressed in the body of the report, based as it is on the superior ability and experience of high officers of state and heads of the executive administration of large and advanced divisions of the country. I am fully conscious, too, of the difficulties which environ the subjects discussed, and of the paucity of data for arriving at correct conclusions. I likewise bear in mind the unremitting endeavours of my colleagues to arrive at correct conclusions in every instance. But our standpoint have not always been the same. My colleagues often saw things from a standpoint very different from what I occupied, and our observations, inferences, and deductions cannot always be the same. I feel it my duty, therefore, both to myself and the Government which did me the the honor to place me on the Committee, to put on record my opinion in regard to all matters of importance, so that the Government may have the two sides of the questions placed before it. I shall not be at all surprised to find that I am entirely mistaken in my opinions, but I humbly think that I shall be wrong if I fail to bring them to the notice of Government for whatever they may be worth.

I am fully conscious that in writing this note I have not been able to condense my ideas in many places, or to fully work out my arguments in others. This is due to the peculiar circumstances under which it had to be written. It was not till the termination of the discus-

sions of the Commission in the latter part of June that I found myself placed in the awkward position of dissenting member. Having then left the Commission and rejoined my substantive appointment, I was obliged, in order to avoid delay, to confine myself to a summary of the principal reasons which led me to differ in opinion from my colleagues. It is likely that this has led to some obscurity of expression in certain places. But I can only express my regret for it.

CHAPTER VII.

COLLECTOR OF CALCUTTA.

In 1888 he was specially selected to fill the much-coveted and important post of Collector of Calcutta vacated by Mr. Goodricke. This appointment he held up to the 19th February, 1901 when he retired from the service. His appointment elicited the most favourable opinions from the public and the Press, both European and Indian. Some of the opinions of the Press and the letters of congratulation are quoted below :—

"In yesterday's *Gazette* Baboo Durgagaty Banerjee is appointed Deputy Collector of Calcutta and Superintendent of Excise Revenue. During the year of probation Baboo Durgagaty has proved himself to be thoroughly at home in the onerous duties entailed in the work and has won for himself golden opinions."—*"Englishman"*, 18th July 1889.

"Baboo Durgagaty Banerjee, Officiating Deputy Collector of Calcutta and Superintendent of Excise Revenue, has, we are glad to notice, been confirmed in those appointments with effect from the 1st April 1889. During the short time that he has been officiating, Baboo Durgagaty has deserved well of the public by introducing several reforms in the Collectorate and removing not a few abuses which existed there before."—*"Indian Mirror."*

"The Bengal Government has been enabled to do some justice to Baboo Durgagaty Banerjea. The Baboo has been confirmed as Deputy Collector of Calcutta and Superintendent of Excise Revenue. He has infused new vigor into the Departments and removed many abuses."—*Reis & Rayyet*, 20th July 1889.

"We are glad to see that Baboo Durgagaty Banerjea, Officiating Deputy Collector of Calcutta and Superintendent of Excise Revenue has been confirmed in those appointments. He is one of the brightest ornaments of the Subordinate Executive Service, and is deserving of the highest post in that Service. During the short time that he has been in charge of the Calcutta office, he has brought it into a state of great efficiency. He has brought to its work an amount of experience, intelligence, and assiduity which would have done credit to any Civilian District Collector."—*Hindu Patriot*, 22nd July 1889.

"We are glad to learn that Baboo Durgagaty Banerjee has been confirmed in his place as Collector of Calcutta. It is due to the transcendental abilities of this Brahmin that this post has for the first time been given to a native of the soil. He has thus conferred an obligation upon the nation."—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 18th July, 1889.

Sir John Edgar telegraphed his congratulations to the following effect on the 8th July 1888 :—

"I congratulate you on your Collectorship. There could not have been a fitter choice."

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,
PRESIDENCY DIVISION.
No. 14 Hare Street, Calcutta,
July 5, '88.

MY DEAR DURGAGATY,

It has been settled that Mr. Kilby relieves Mr. Goodricke of Income-Tax and you are to act for him in the other departments. I congratulate you very sincerely on the well-deserved promotion. The only drawback to my pleasure is that I lose so good a Personal Assistant.

Yours sincerely,
A. SMITH.

SIMLA, 11th July.

MY DEAR DURGAGATY BABU,

I am really glad that you have reached what you say is the height of your ambition. You have now an opportunity of doing credit to yourself and to your service, also of proving that an Indian gentleman can, by his tact, straightforwardness and judgment, work well and harmoniously with the European Commercial Community. If the Calcutta Collectorate is anything like what it was sometime ago, when we had so much trouble with the records, your work is cut out for you. But I know of no man I would sooner put to hard work of that sort than yourself. You have my best wishes for your success.

Yours sincerely,
A. P. MACDONNELL.
(Now LORD MACDONNELL).

My dear Durgagaty,

I sincerely congratulate you on your promotion to the Collectorship of Calcutta ; there could not have been a better appointment.

I am, yours sincerely,
H. J. S. COTTON.

11 KRISHNARAM BOSE'S LANE.

July 9th, 1888.

My dear Durgagaty Babu,

Kindly accept my heartfelt congratulations on your appointment as Collector of Calcutta. May God give you long life, health and peace of mind to enjoy your distinctions. Your present appointment establishes a claim of your countrymen in future.

Yours very sincerely,
MAHESH CHANDRA NAYARATNA.

MUNICIPAL OFFICE,
Calcutta, 6th July, 1888.

My dear Durgagaty,

I heard of your promotion some days ago and heartily congratulate you on it.

Yours sincerely,
H. L. HARRISON.

RAJNAGAR, DARBHANGA
10th July.

My dear Babu Durgagaty,

I write to congratulate you on your elevation to the Calcutta Collectorate, an appointment which you have

richly deserved by your long and distinguished public services. I hope you will long enjoy your new position.

I am very sorry that I have not heard from you for an age. I hope this will find you in good health.

Yours sincerely,
(Sir) RAMESWAR SINGH.

UTTERPARA,
24th July, 1888.

My dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for your kind sympathy and condolence with my affliction and for your kind expressions regarding my dear father.

Yours very sincerely,
PEARY MOHON MUKERJEE.

P. S. You can well understand why you received no congratulations from me on your appointment to your present office. I have always looked upon you as a member of the family and felt much proud at your advancement but I was too anxious about father's illness to think of anything else.

64, MUSJIDBARI STREET,
The 11th August, 1888.

My dear Durgagaty,

Wishing to congratulate you personally on your elevation to the Calcutta Collectorate, I could not find time to call till Wednesday last. Though it was near 6 p. m. you had not come in and I had to leave my card.

I am very glad indeed you have been *righted at last*. I thought your independence would be your enemy like somebody else's, but thank Heaven, your lines are cast in better times.

Wishing you continued success, I remain

Yours very sincerely,
ISSUR CHUNDER MITTER.

My dear Durgagaty,

16. 7.

* * * * *

I am delighted to be able to congratulate you on your confirmation.

Yours sincerely,
J. W. EDGAR.

As Collector of Calcutta he introduced among others, the following administrative reforms which brought in a considerable increase of revenue :—

(I) The amalgamation of the distillery at Manick-tollah with that at Russa, obviating the maintenance of two separate distillery establishments.

(II) The introduction in the Russa Distillery of large English-pattern copper stills in the place of primitive native pattern earthen stills of small size,—a measure which effected a saving of expenditure to the extent of Rs. 70,000, which would otherwise have been required for building an additional still shed. This fact afforded satisfaction to Sir Charles Elliott, as he was informed by the Hon'ble Mr. Risley, the Secretary in the Financial Department who wrote to say that "the

Lieutenant Governor is pleased at your solution of the Russa-Manicktollah difficulty".

(III) Enhancement of fees for licenses for the sale of imported spirits, which, while resulting in a considerable increase in the revenue, reduced the number of licersees, confining them to respectable firms carrying on considerable business.

During his incumbency, the Excise and Stamp revenues increased by Rs. 31,50,000/-. The success of his administration of an important office in the Metropolis of India and great commercial centre was repeatedly recognised by Government and the mercantile community.

Mr. Shirley Tremearne wrote in 1893—"the trade is very much indebted to you"; and Mr. S. E. J. Clarke, the able Secretary of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, expressed his appreciation in the following letter :—

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Calcutta, 1st June, 1896.

My dear Rai Bahadur,

I called at your office on Wednesday last but missed you. I was much struck by the good order and method I saw everywhere. I consider your office is one of the best arranged in Calcutta.

* * * * *

Yours sincerely,
S. E. J. CLARKE.

The Chairman of the Calcutta Wine, Beer and Spirits Association spoke of him in the following terms :—

“I am glad to be able to record our grateful appreciation of the courtesy extended, and assistance rendered, by the Hon’ble Rai Durgagaty Banerjee as Superintendent of Excise. Our relations have been of the most cordial character ; and the trade has reason to congratulate itself that this responsible office is under such adequate and capable control”.

He was granted a special house—allowance on the recommendation of Sir Charles Elliott in the following flattering terms :—

“Rai Durgagaty Banerjee has been conspicuous for good service during his long, and useful career, and has been appointed to the important post of Collector of Calcutta, which is open to officers of his class. Living in Calcutta for a native is very expensive, and unless some addition is made in the shape of house-allowance, the simple pay of the post hardly suffices to enable one to maintain the dignity of his position.”

In recognition of his services the title of Rai Bahadur was conferred on him on the 1st January 1891, followed in January 1895 by a Companionship of the Indian Empire.

In March 1895 he was appointed by Sir Charles Elliott a member of the Bengal Council, to which he was reappointed in March 1896 by Sir Alexander Mackenzie and to which he was, for the third time, appointed by Sir John Woodburn who had succeeded Sir Alexander. His sturdy independence in the Council

where he did much valuable and good work in his characteristic quiet way won the admiration of all public men and the Press. A few of the numerous letters of congratulation received by him on these occasions and the opinions of the Press are quoted below. The sincere good wishes they contain show how greatly he was held in the estimation of a host of friends and public bodies.

"It is a pleasure to me that your name is in to-day's Gazette, though I should have liked to see it in a different place. All the same, it is a gratification to know that one whom I value so highly, both privately as a friend and officially as an able and upright fellow-worker in the service of the State, has secured an instalment of the recognition of Government."

Yours sincerely,
J. EDGAR.

36, CHOWRINGHEE
3-1-91.

My dear Durgagaty,

Though I imagine you are more or less indifferent to Rai Bahaduri, I may be allowed to congratulate you on the recognition of your character and public services in the New Year's Gazette.

Yours sincerely,
H. J. S. COTTON.

42, MIRZAPUR STREET,
The 1st January 1891.

My dear Rai Bahadur,

I hope you will excuse me for congratulating you. I use the word "excuse", because I thought there was something better in store for you.

Yours sincerely,
RAM SANKAR SEN.

8, MANICKTOLLAH STREET,
January 1st, 1891.

My dear Durgagaty,

Allow me to congratulate you upon the Government having made that title personal which has belonged to you officially. I wish you long life and prosperity.

Yours sincerely,
(RAJAH) RAJENDRA LALA MITRA.

27, MOTT'S LANE,
Calcutta, January 1, 1891.

My dear Rai Bahadur,

It is with sincere pleasure that I offer my congratulations to you. You fully deserved the title and a great deal more. You have endeared yourself to all your friends by your many noble qualities of head and heart, and that you may live long and happy is the prayer of all your friends and admirers.

Yours very sincerely,
RAJ KUMAR SARVADHIKARY.

THE PRASAD,
January 1st, 1891.

My dear Rai Bahadur,

Accept my best and hearty thanks for your kind congratulations.

* * * * *

What, however, gives me great pleasure is that this occasion affords an opportunity of heartily reciprocating your felicitations. I sincerely hope and trust that the Rai Bahadurship is the precursor of still higher honours and that at no distant date we shall be in a position to congratulate you on some worthier recognition by the Government of your long and meritorious services.

Thanking you again for your kind wishes, I am,

Yours very sincerely,
(Sir) JOTINDRA MOHON TAGORE.

BELVEDERE,
Calcutta, 1st January 1895.

My dear Sir,

I am very pleased to have been able to secure for you the decoration which has been conferred on you to-day. May you long live to enjoy it.

Yours sincerely,
C. A. ELLIOTT.

8 SOUTHWELLS GARDEN, S. W.

12th December, 1894.

My dear Sir,

As this will not reach you till the January Gazette is out, I shall not be indiscreet in offering you my sincere congratulation on the decoration for which the Viceroy has nominated you. I hope you will live long to enjoy it, and that the coming year will be one of prosperity and happiness to you.

Yours ever sincerely,

S. C. BAYLEY.

New Year's Day, 1895.

My dear Sir,

The first thing that I was going to do on reaching home this morning—for I went down to Calcutta yesterday evening to be present at the C. S. dinner—was to write and congratulate you on the announcement in the Gazette of your being made a C. I. E. I do this most cordially and I recognize in this distinction an appreciation of steady work which you have done in a very difficult office. I am glad that this year has brought this honour to an old friend of mine.

Yours very truly,

J. MONRO.

VILLA GUICCIARDINI,
Via Montughi, 21st January 1895.

My dear Durgagaty,

I did not write to you at once on the appearance of the Gazette, because I thought that you would have understood the hint given in a previous letter, and would have known of my sincere gratification at the recognition of the good services you have done to the State. It would be superfluous for me now to dwell at any length on this subject ; you know well how thoroughly grateful I was to you for the excellent work done when we were together in Patna, and no less for the help received from you in later times when you were to me a trustworthy adviser and valued friend. It is very pleasant to Sir Steuart Bayley, to me and to others of your friends who are no longer in India, to know that your merits are as fully appreciated by Sir Charles Elliott as they were by us, and I am sure that they would all join me in congratulating you on the honour which has come to adorn your distinguished career.

Yours sincerely,
 JOHN EDGAR.

WESTCOTT HILL,
 WESTCOTT DORKING.
England, 17th January, 1895.

Dear Baboo Durgagaty,

I was extremely pleased to see your name in the list of Honours for India on the New Year, and I am

very glad to find that Government have thus acknowledged your long and meritorious service. I offer you my hearty congratulations.

* * * * *

Yours sincerely,
FRED. M. HALLIDAY.

192 BEDFORD HILL,
BALLWIN, LONDON S. W.
18th January, 1895.

My dear Durgagaty,

I must write you a few lines to say how glad I am to see your C. I. E. in the list of Empress—Day honours., I do not know if you are the first of your service on whom the honour has been conferred ; but if it has before been given to any, the number is very small, so that your selection for it is a very special and very well-deserved compliment.

* * *

Yours sincerely,
A. SMITH.

1st January, 1895.

My dear Durgagaty,

I lose no time in sending you my hearty congratulations on the well-earned distinction which has been conferred on you by Her Majesty in to-day's Gazette. Few men know better than I do what good service you have rendered to the Government, and how well it has merited recognition. With my best wishes for your further prosperity,

I am always yours sincerely,
H. J. S. COTTON.

1st January, 1895.

My dear Durgagaty,

It was with the greatest pleasure that I saw your name in this morning's Gazette, for its presence there is a recognition of much good and important work done for Government for many years.

I trust you may long live to enjoy these well-deserved honours, which I knew some time ago to be likely to fall to your lot.

Believe me to be,

Yours very truly,

J. A. BOURDILLON.

U. S. CLUB,

1st January, 1895.

My dear Durgagaty,

My first letter of this year must be to congratulate you most sincerely on your C. I. E. which I was delighted to see in to-day's Gazette. I think you are the first member of your service who has the decoration by good steady service to Government, which is to my mind the best recommendation for these honours. May you live long to enjoy the distinction.

Yours sincerely,

C. E. BUCKLAND.

50, PARK STREET,

13th January, 1895.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hope Bagola Babu conveyed to you my congratulations on your C. I. E. but in any case I wish to offer

them myself. I thought I had done so long ago when I remembered to write to one or two other of my friends receiving titles. But I found I had omitted to do so in your case and one other. We shall see whether it is not the prelude to a K. C. I. E. I hope so at least.

Yours truly,
G. E. MANISTY.

Burdwan, 3rd January, 1895.

DEAR RAI BAHADUR,

Allow me to congratulate you on the further distinction which Government has conferred on you, one which is not often conferred upon uncovenanted officers, and therefore so much more to be valued. I trust that this year will continue to be one of prosperity to you and yours. It has begun auspiciously.

Yours very truly,
J. INGLIS.

57, COTTON STREET,
Calcutta, the 7th January, 1895.

MY DEAR RAI BAHADUR,

I have much pleasure to congratulate you on your well-deserved new honour which it has pleased Government to vest you with. Decorations of a higher order are in store for you. The new honour, I may venture to add, has given universal satisfaction.

I remain yours sincerely,
(RAJAH) SHEWBUX BAGLA.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

3rd January, 1895.

"In Calcutta, indeed throughout Bengal, Mr. Durgagati Bannerji's C. I. E. will be extremely popular. As Collector of Calcutta and Superintendent of Excise in Bengal, he has administered a highly responsible and difficult branch of public service in a manner that has met with universal approbation"—Englishman.

9th January, 1895.

"We are pleased indeed to notice that the distinction of C. I. E. has been bestowed on our worthy Collector, Rai Durgagati Banerji Bahadur. He is an officer who makes business run smoothly by his tact and courtesy, while his administration of the Department must show the Government that his procedure means a profit."—Capital.

3rd January, 1895.

"Rai Durgagati Banerji is an ornament of the Subordinate Executive Service, and as Collector of Stamps and Superintendent of Excise Revenue in Calcutta, he has crowned a most useful and distinguished career. We heartily congratulate him on his being invested with the insignia of a Companion of the Indian Empire."—*Hindoo Patriot.*

8th January, 1895.

"We must congratulate Rai Durgagati Bannerjee on being honoured with a C. I. E. In Babu Durgagati Banerjee has the problem been satisfactorily proved

that a Bengalee can occupy an important post like that of the Collector of Calcutta and acquire the sincere esteem of both Englishmen and Indians"—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

3rd January, 1895.

"A C. I. E.—ship on Rai Durgagati Banerji Bahadur, is a somewhat tardy recognition of his splendid services as Collector of Calcutta. The local Collectorate before his time was literally an Augean Stable. By honouring him Government has shewn its genuine appreciation of proved merit and honest and devoted work"—*Indian Mirror*.

5th January, 1895.

"The New Year's Day Honours have, as usual, been conferred upon officials who have distributed them among themselves. We are glad to notice however that a deserving native official, Rai Durgagati Banerji Bahadur, has his worth acknowledged by a C. I. E.—ship."—*The Bengalee*.

6th January, 1895.

"But the appointment that will give great pleasure to wide circles in Bengal and Behar is that of Rai Durgagati Bannerji Bahadur, formerly first Personal Assistant to the Commissioner in the Patna Division and next filling the same capacity in the Presidency Division and now Collector of Calcutta and Superintendent of Excise in the City and Suburbs. In 1874-75 this gentlemen rendered eminent service in the management of famine relief operations in Behar under Sir

Steuart Bayley to whom he proved a right hand that never failed in any extremity of the crisis. It was thought at the time that his services would have been suitably recognised. It is only now after two decades of years, when he has from year to year been largely raising the Excise Revenue of Calcutta and its Suburbs by his watchful, able and tactful management of the Department that he has been selected for an honor which should have come to him earlier, if it was to have come to him at all, as a reward for long, able and distinguished services. Both as an able member of the Subordinate Executive Service and as a Municipal Commissioner whose independence is well-known, the distinction in his case is more than well-merited."—*The Liberal*,

FLORENCE, VILLA GUICCIARDINI,
A Montughi, 17th May, 1895.

MY DEAR DURGAGATI,

Although very much pressed for time, I must not let this mail go out without a line to tell you what very great pleasure the announcement of your appointment to the Bengal Legislative Council has given me. It is very gratifying to have this further proof of the way to which your long admirable service is being appreciated by the Government and I trust that when the time comes, that appreciation will be again shown by an addition to the ordinary pension.

Yours sincerely,
 J. W. EDGAR.

8, SOUTHWELL GARDENS, S. W.

12th May, 1895.

MY DEAR SIR,

I was very glad to get your letter of 17th April and must apologise if I had failed to answer a previous letter. I am truly glad to hear of your appointment in the Bengal Council and feel sure you will continue in that post to secure the public approval which has marked the performance of your duties in less responsible appointments. It is a deserved honour but apart from that, it is also a good selection.

Yours very truly,

S. C. BAYLEY.

Montughi, April 30th.

My dear Durgagaty,

* * * Let me congratulate you on your reappointment to the Bengal Council. It is indeed pleasant to know that your worth is still recognised though your earlier friends have left the country. I can assure you that there is no one to whom anything good happening to you can be more welcome than it is to me. * * *

Yours sincerely,
JOHN EDGAR.

29-3-95

Dear Durgagaty,

I have very great pleasure in congratulating you on your appointment as a member of the Bengal Council.

Yours sincerely,
H. J. S. COTTON.

Ranaghat, April 5th, 1895.

My dear Sir,

A line of congratulation on the honor which has been conferred on you by a seat in the Bengal Council.

Yours very truly.

J. MONRO.

The Palace,

Murshidabad, 4th April, 1895.

My dear Durgagaty Babu,

I am very glad to learn that you have been appointed a member of the Legislative Council and congratulate you most warmly upon the honor that Government has thus been pleased to do you. It does one good to know that you deserve the honor so eminently, enjoying as you do, and that most justly, the confidence of Government as well as of all classes of the community. I wish and hope that the same success and credit that have hitherto distinguished your brilliant career will attend you in the discharge of your onerous duties in the Legislative Council.

Wishing you a constant enjoyment of good health and happiness,

Yours sincerely,

(Sir) HOSSEIN ALI MIRZA.

Serajgunge, 5th April, 1895.

My dear Durgagati Babu,

Having come here in a case since a few days ago I am delighted to read in the Calcutta papers to-day the

welcome news of your appointment to the Bengal Council. Accept my hearty congratulations on the honor done by Government to you, and on the recognition of your valuable services and tried capacity. Trusting that your work in this new sphere will be useful alike to Government and the people, and with my best wishes for your health and success,

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
A. M. BOSE.

Bankipur, 2nd April, 1895.

My dear friend,

Permit me to congratulate you on your appointment to the Council. The only wonder to me is that they did not appoint you ere long, you who deserve to be so well there. It is not the "Tartars" we want so much but him who can do real and substantial work; and in that I am sure you will beat down all the "Tartars" hollow

* * * *

Yours sincerely,
GURU PROSAD SEN.

30th March 1895.

"It has been settled that Rai Durgagati Bannerji Bahadur C. I. E, the Collector of Stamps and Excise Revenue, Calcutta is to be appointed to the seat in the Bengal Council which has been rendered vacant by the resignation of Moulvi Abdul Jabbar, Khan Bahadur.

The appointment will be received with the greatest satisfaction by all classes of the community with whom the new Councillor is deservedly popular. Following, as it does, so closely upon the C. I. E. which was recently conferred upon him, it affords a flattering indication to Rai Durgagati Banerji of the confidence which is placed in him by Government."—Englishman.

10th April 1895.

"We are very glad to see Rai Durgagati Bannerji Bahadur C. I. E. has been appointed a Member of the Bengal Council. The Babu is one of the most popular native officials, for, while always keeping the interest of the Government in view, he invariably endeavours to facilitate business."—Capital.

Calcutta, 31st March, 1895.

"The Hon'ble Moulvi Abdul Jabbar retires from the public service and goes to Mecca on pilgrimage. He has been long a member of the Bengal Legislative Council, having been several times re-nominated by Government. By his retirement a vacancy has occurred in the Council. Moulvi Abdul Jubbar belongs to the Subordinate Executive Service, and another member of that Service would naturally be selected to succeed the Moulvi in the Council. Accordingly we find that the choice of Government has fallen on Rai Durgagati Bannerji Bahadur, C. I. E. The nomination is unexceptionable, and both the Lieutenant Governor and the recipient of the honour may be heartily congratulated on it. Rai Durgagaty Bannerji has served the State for many years with distinction, and while he has invariably enjoyed the

confidence of Government he has at the same time commanded the esteem of the public. As Collector of Land Revenue in Calcutta it has been his good fortune to give satisfaction to Europeans and Indians alike. As a nominated Commissioner in the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, Rai Durgagati Bannerji has rendered some excellent service, and the independence he has at times shewn is most creditable to him. We therefore look forward to his career in the Bengal Legislative Council with considerable expectation, which is, however, not altogether unmixed with some little misgiving. Independence as a Municipal Commissioner and independence as a Councillor are two distinct things. But we think we know enough of Rai Durgagati Bannerji's past to warrant us to believe that he will try his best to discharge his new duties conscientiously, while his experience and intelligence will enable him to do his legislative work in an able manner."—Indian Mirror.

1st April, 1895.

"Rai Durgagati Bannerji Bahadur, C. I. E. Collector of Stamps and Excise Revenue in Calcutta is to succeed Moulvi Abdul Jubbar as a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council. Rai Durgagati is a brilliant ornament of the Subordinate Executive Service and has rendered very efficient service to the State on many occasions, as for instance on the occasion of the Behar Famine. His abilities are of a more sound than showy character, and we have no hesitation in saying that he will prove an acquisition to the Council".—Hindu Patriot.

Calcutta, 1st April 1895.

"There is no doubt of it that the appointment of Rai Durgagati Banerjee Bahadur, as a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council would give universal satisfaction. With his sound sense of things and wide experience of the country there is no question that he would prove an eminently useful member, if his freedom of expression is not interfered with by the Government."
—The Amrita Bazar Patrika.

6th April, 1895.

"Rai Durgagati Bannerjee Bahadur, C. I. E., has been appointed to succeed Moulvi Abdul Jubbar, Khan Bahadur, as a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council. No better selection could have been made. Rai Durgagati is one of the ablest officers of Government we have come in contact with, and his ability is equal to his independence. His appointment will add to the deliberative strength of the Council. He will also be a most efficient worker in Select Committees. We congratulate the Government upon the selection of so able and independent an official."—Bengalee.

31st March, 1895.

"We have only time to notice with delight the appointment of Rai Durgagati Banerjee, C. I. E., as a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council in place of the Hon'ble Moulvi Abdul Jubbar Khan Bahadur, who has retired."—Unity and the Minister.

14th April, 1895.

"In our last issue we had barely time to express our delight at the appointment of Rai Durgagati Bannerjee, Bahadur, C. I. E., to a seat in the Bengal Legislative Council. We are glad to find that the selection has given universal satisfaction. People naturally thought that a Mahomedan gentleman having retired, a Mahomedan would be appointed to succeed him. But Sir Charles Elliott, who has never been slow to appreciate and recognise native talents, has, by this fresh instance of the wisdom of his choice, conferred an obligation on all sections of the Indian community. While lately congratulating the Rai Bahadur on his decoration with a C. I. E. we said that all classes of men who came in contact with him in the transaction of business went away impressed with his thorough ability, impartiality and honesty. We find that statement confirmed by the outburst of enthusiasm and joy with which Europeans, Hindus and Mahomedans have alike hailed his elevation to the Council. The testimony of respectable Mahomedans is specially noteworthy, as it shows a preference which we can only account for by the high estimation in which Rai Bahadur Durgagati is held by this class of men along with others. We know how he is esteemed by the public as a Municipal Commissioner. We are glad that he has been re-appointed as a member of the Corporation, where his thorough independence, right sympathies, and fearless advocacy of the cause of the poor endeared him to all orders of the people".—Unity and the Minister.

6th April, 1895.

"The Hon'ble Moulvi Abdul Jubbar, Khan Bahadur, having resigned his seat, Rai Bahadur Durgagati Bannerjee, C. I. E., Collector of Stamp Revenue, Superintendent of Excise Revenue and Deputy Collector of Land Revenue, Calcutta has been appointed a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council. Possessed of administrative experience, the Rai Bahadur fittingly replaces the Khan Bahadur. We hope he will be allowed full latitude to prove his usefulness"—Reis & Rayyet.

When the present Stamp Act was under consideration, the Hon'ble Sir H. E. M. James of the Bombay Civil Service and later on Commissioner in Sind, who was in charge of the Bill, sought his co-operation and acknowledged his services in the letter noted below, which is indeed highly complimentary—

"Allow me to thank you for all the assistance you so kindly and willingly lent me, and which was of very great value to me. I hope that when the Government have time to take up the question, we shall find the work greatly improved and strengthened. I may tell you that the figures which you gave me of loss of revenue owing to the mistake in the word "lease" proved of very great value."

His services in this connection also received the approbation of Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

In the capacity of a Commissioner of the Calcutta Corporation he rendered excellent service to the public for many years and the zeal, energy and independence

with which he discharged his duties are too well known to the rate-payers to need any recapitulation.

He retired on the 19th February, 1901, after obtaining repeated extensions of service and his retirement elicited the letters quoted below which will speak for themselves.

U. S. CLUB,
18th February, 1901.

My dear Durgagati,

This is, I believe, the last day of your active service of over 35 years. Though there will be no obituary notice in the Gazette, I cannot let you retire without a few words in acknowledgment of all that you have done throughout your very distinguished career. Whether as Personal Assistant to the Commissioners of Patna and the Presidency successively, or as a Member of the Salaries Commission, or as member of the Legislative Council, you have gained a high reputation for good and loyal work, for ability, tact and administrative efficiency and have maintained it to the last day of office. We have been associated together in many matters of various kinds in different relations, and I have ever found you a wise and welcome counsellor, a laborious fellow-worker and a good friend; for all your personal co-operation and assistance I am greatly indebted to you. Now that you will have some rest, I trust that you will find some employment for yourself, and be long spared to us, who regret sincerely that the time for your retirement has arrived.

With very good wish,

Believe me

Always yours very sincerely,

C. E. BUCKLAND.

2, BARKSTON GARDENS, S. W.

22nd March.

My dear Sir,

* * *

I am sorry you have had to retire from the service and that you are leaving Calcutta, for there the Government would have at least had the opportunity of consulting and profiting by your experience.

With our kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
S. C. BAYLEY.

CAMOLDOLO
CASENTINE, ITALY.

Aug. 28. 01.

My dear Rai Bahadur,

* * *

One must regret the loss to the State of an officer so able and thoroughly valued. I sincerely hope that your application for special pension has been successful. I know of no one whose services have more fully deserved such a reward.

* * *

With every good wish,

I am,
yours sincerely,
JOHN EDGAR.

December, 8th 1900.

My dear Sir,

I have to thank you very much for your kind note of 8th Novr.

* * * *

It makes me feel sad to think of you also as retiring. Unless you have greatly altered since I saw you last, I should say that you have much more work in you than many a younger man. But you are not likely to be idle ; you will always find much semi-official work to do. In any case you will have the pleasure of sharing with your many friends the knowledge that no man of your generation has done more work, whether official or extra-official, for his country than you have.

* * * *

What will your address be after you have given up your office? I hope you will let us have news of you sometimes.

With our very kind regards,

I am yours sincerely,
C. C. STEVENS.

32 HARCOURT TERRACE.

May 24th, 01.

My dear Sir,

It is "an age" (as they say) since I heard from you : I fear it is almost equally long since I wrote to you. So here is a line to tell you that I am still in the land of the living ; I hope to receive similar assurances from you.

Since you wrote last you have retired, I will not use the hackneyed words and say, to your "well-earned rest"; for I know that as in my own case, that is not the sort of reward you would choose. But you are more fortunate, because you are still among your own interests and are not entirely cut off from them.

* * *

I wish you a long and happy period of retirement.

Yours sincerely,
C. C. STEVENS.

RANAGHAT.

December 24, 1900.

My dear Sir,

I am very glad to receive your letter, but sorry to learn that Government is going to lose your service so soon. Well, you leave behind you a record of long, faithful and distinguished service to the State. * *. I know of no case in which a claim for special pension deserves more consideration than yours. Your life has been spent in Government service. You have filled responsible posts with invariable credit to yourself and benefit to the public.

You came to me under altogether exceptional circumstances when you joined the Presidency Division. I have had to do with many excellent officers, and the personal assistants to Commissioners are always specially selected men. I certainly never had a Personal Assistant who not merely had mastered all the details of divisional work, but also grasped the principles of administration as you did, and your assistance to me was ever given as willingly as effectively.

You are one of the few old officers now remaining with whom I served, and I do not forget that when I returned to India as a private individual, I was met at the jetty by two of my old comrades—one, Babu———with whom to serve was ever a pleasure, the other, yourself. When I left London some time after resigning the Commissionership of the Police of the Metropolis, I was touched to find the Railway Station filled with officers and men of the Metropolitan Police, who came to say good-bye to their old chief. I was equally touched to be met in Calcutta on my arrival by two of my old comrades, who served under me when I was a member of the Bengal Civil Service. I like to be well served, but I like far better to feel that those who served under me regard me as their friend when the tie of service together no longer connects us. And this pleasure I have always found in the relations which exist between you and me.

Yours very truly,
J. MONRO.

The different public Associations and the Press expressed their regret at his retirement in terms which I cannot avoid the temptation of quoting :—

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.
Calcutta, the 22nd February, 1901.

Rai Durgagati Banerjea Bahadur, C. I. E.

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to convey to you their acknowledg-

ments for your letter of the 15th instant, expressing your appreciation of the co-operation and help you have invariably received from them during your tenure of office as Collector of Calcutta.

I am instructed by the Committee to say, in reply, that the obligation in their opinion is a mutual one, and to express their regret at the termination of the relations between yourself and the Chamber, which have existed so long and which have always been of the most amicable and friendly nature. The Committee fully appreciate the efforts you have always made to meet the convenience of the mercantile community, and they trust that you may long enjoy your well-earned retirement.

Yours faithfully,
W. PARSONS.
Secretary.

DALHOUSIE INSTITUTE,
Calcutta, the 1st March, 1901.

From

The Secretary to the Calcutta Trades Association.

To

Rai. Durgagati Banerjea Bahadur, C. I. E.

Dear Sir,

It was brought to the notice of the Committee of the Calcutta Trades Association at a meeting held this morning that you were about to retire from the service of Government, and it may please you to know that much regret was felt when the announcement was made.

At the request of the Committee, I write to acknowledge the courtesy which always marked your intercourse with the Association, the attention which every reference received at your hands, and your desire to to facilitate business. In the opinion of the Committee you deserve the thanks of the public for the manner in which you performed the duties of your position as Collector of Calcutta, and in now retiring from that office, you carry with you the best wishes of this Association.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

G. HICKIE,

Secretary, Calcutta Trades Association.

Calcutta, 26th Feb. 1901.

Sir,

I am requested by the Members of the Attorneys' Association to convey to you an expression of their sincere regret at your retirement from the office of the Collector of Stamp Revenue, which you have so long held and in which you have so creditably and efficiently discharged your duties, and to add that the uniform attention and courtesy you have shown to members of the legal profession and the facilities you have invariably afforded for the transaction of business have been greatly appreciated. The Members of the Association hope that you may long enjoy the benefit of your well-earned pension.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

H. C. EGGAR.

Chairman.

25, MANGOE LANE,
Calcutta, the 26th February, 1901.

Rai Durgagati Banerjea Bahadur, C. I. E.

Dear Sir,

Having learnt that you handed over the reins of office to your successor, we feel we cannot let the opportunity pass without expressing to you our appreciation of your good work and able assistance to us during your tenure of office.

For the many years we have had the pleasure of working with you, our relations have always been of the most friendly nature, and though we should be the first to congratulate you on your well-earned retirement, our good wishes cannot be other than tempered with regret when we think of the loss your absence entails.

Wishing you many years to enjoy your pension,

We are, dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

LYALL MARSHALL & CO.

THE ENGLISHMAN. c

The Hon. Durgagati Banerji, Rai Bahadur, C. I. E., who is about to retire from the Provincial Executive Service, has had a long and honourable career. Thirty-five years as a public servant provides in itself a claim for recognition, and especially when a good portion of the time has been occupied with the discharge of such important duties as those of Collector and Superintendent of Excise Revenue in Calcutta—offices that he

has filled with credit to himself and satisfaction to the Government, and the public at large. His nomination six years ago to a seat on the Bengal Legislative Council affords testimony to the high estimation in which he was held by the Government ; and in his retirement he will carry with him the wishes of a large circle, both European and Native, for the enjoyment of a well-earned leisure.

THE INDIAN DAILY NEWS.

By the retirement of the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Durgagati Banerjea C. I. E., Collector of Calcutta and Superintendent of Excise Revenue and Collector of Stamp Revenue, the Government of Bengal lose the services of one of the most capable officers of the Provincial Service. Starting as a Deputy Magistrate, under the old system in August 1865, Rai Durgagati may be said to have reached the summit of his ambition in March 1895, when he was appointed Member of the Bengal Legislative Council. This official recognition of his zeal and capability was thoroughly endorsed by all sections of public opinion in Calcutta. Europeans and natives alike acknowledged that he performed the difficult duties of Collector of Calcutta with rare tact and ability, and that he would be an useful representative in Council. The latter hope was realised ; and he will bear with him in his retirement, which we trust will be *otium cum dignitate* in the true sense, the knowledge that he has earned an esteem which is absolutely dependent on thorough devotion to duty.

THE STATESMAN.

After a long and creditable career of thirty-five years in the public service, the Hon'ble Durgagati Banerjea, Rai Bahadur, C. I. E. has obtained leave to retire. In him the Local Government loses perhaps the most capable Bengalee member of the Provincial Executive Service. As Collector of Calcutta, a post he reached after long and good work in minor appointments, he has earned golden opinions from Europeans and Natives alike ; while the satisfaction with which the Government viewed his labours was shown by his nomination, some six years ago, to the Bengal Legislative Council. "It would be improper to allow the retirement of so able and distinguished a public servant to pass unnoticed, and we gladly record our tribute to his worth. We can only trust that the leisure he has so hardly earned will be long enjoyed.

CAPITAL.

There has lately retired from Government Service an official with whom it was a pleasure to transact business, and whose place it will be difficult to fill. Courteous, obliging, prompt and attentive, Rai Durgagati Banerjee enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the mercantile community. He has retired after a long and meritorious service on a well-earned pension, and our good wishes follow him into his retirement. Calcutta will be fortunate if the Collector who succeeds him deserves as well of the community. Babu Durgagati Bannerjee took a great interest in the preven-

tion of the sale of spurious or sophisticated liquors in the bazar, and was always ready to help the Calcutta Wine Trade Association in this direction. We understand that he has submitted a proposal to Government, which, if adopted, would, in our opinion, put an end to this objectionable traffic.

THE AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA.

Rai Durgagati Banerjee Bahadur, C. I. E., Collector of Calcutta retires from service to-day. We need hardly say that his retirement will very much be regretted by the general public, for he was eminently popular, not only with his own countrymen, but Europeans also. As for his ability, suffice it to say that he began as an humble clerk and ended by occupying with exceptional credit one of the highest posts reserved for the people of this country. He is emphatically a self-made man; and as such, is entitled to the highest respect of all. As a Government Servant he was of course bound hand and foot, and yet as a member of the Salaries Commission, he showed an amount of independence which staggered many people, specially as he had to fight with the president of the Commission, who was his official superior, and who threatened him with his displeasure. Babu Durgagati however, wrote in his dissent that he knew that ministerial officers needed an increase of salaries, and as an honourable man, he was bound to record the fact. His courage of conviction, however, did not offend the Government but raised him in its estimation. In a private conversation with Mr. Oldham, the late member of the Board, we asked him what he thought of Babu

Durgagati Bannerjee, and his reply was that he, Babu Durgagati, was a man of "European training and education", (we quote his exact words) and that "it would be very difficult to find one like him in the whole Provincial service". That is, we believe, the general opinion among the high officials regarding him. We hope, Babu Durgagati will live for many years yet, and prove himself useful to the country, for, men like him are very rare amongst us.

THE BENGALLEE.

Another distinguished officer will soon retire and his office will not again know him, we refer to the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Durgagati Banerjee, Collector of Calcutta. Entering the subordinate Executive Service in 1885, he rose by dint of industry, ability and unflinching honesty of purpose to one of the highest appointments reserved for his Service, and he performed his duties in a manner which extorted universal approbation. The Government has recognized his merits and abilities by the titles which it conferred upon him from time to time. In his retirement he will carry with him the good wishes of his countrymen and the solace which is derived from the consciousness of having done one's duty.

He was recommended a special pension of Rs. 6000 per annum—which recommendation, however, by a curious irony of fate, was cut down to Rs. 5600 by the Government of India and duly sanctioned by the Secretary of State for India. When the order came, Sir John Woodburn was not at all satisfied at the scant courtesy his recommendation had received. He

entered his protest in very emphatic terms and again sent up a fresh recommendation for the full amount, which was this time sanctioned. The correspondence between the Governments of Bengal and India and the Secretary of State on the subject is given in the appendix for satisfying the curiosity of the readers. Thus the faithful servant of Government had the unique honor of being twice recommended for a special pension. The course adopted by the Government of Bengal was unprecedented in the annals of official correspondence. How gratifying it was to his friends will be evident from the following letters :

2, BARKSTON GARDENS, S. W.

5th July.

My dear Sir,

* * * *

I know how ably and successfully you have served the Government and the additional pension would be but a small recognition of the value of such service.

Yours very truly,

S. C. BAYLEY.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S CAMP

Lucknow, 14th August 1902.

My dear Rai Bahadur,

I have received to-day with the highest satisfaction a letter from the Government of India saying that the Secretary of State has sanctioned for you a pension of Rs. 6,000 a year instead of the Rs. 5,600 previously sanctioned. This will take effect from the date of your retirement.

I rejoice at this result, and send you my wishes for a long and happy life in the enjoyment of your honours. Believe me,

Your sincere friend,
J. WOODBURN,

His Honor when visiting Suri stopped at the Rai Bahadur's place to enquire about him, the latter having gone there to recruit his health. This was no doubt very kind of the Governor of the Province and a mark of signal honor.

India Office,
WHITEHALL, S. W.

17th September.

My dear Sir,

Many thanks for your letter of the 14th August *
Had there been any one here acquainted with your services and with the unique position you have held in the estimation of successive Governments of Bengal, I am sure, it would not have occurred. However all is well that ends well and I am very glad that the "amende" has now been made to you. * * *

I need not tell you how greatly I felt the shock of Sir John Edgar's death. * * *

In mind as well as in heart he was a most exceptional man, and those who knew him best, feel most deeply the severity of his loss.

I hope you have recovered your health which had, when you wrote previously, been very far from what friends would wish.

Yours sincerely,
S. C. BAYLEY.

Simla, August, 27th 1902.

My dear Sir,

I am very glad that the question of your pension has been satisfactorily settled at last. It would have been a crying shame if through any misunderstanding anything short of the maximum had been sanctioned for you. I hope you have many years left in which to enjoy the fruits of your life-long service. Next November, I shall be in Calcutta and hope to have the pleasure of seeing you again.

Yours sincerely,

E. N. BAKER.

GRASSMERE,

Simla, 8th September, 1902.

Dear Sir,

* * * *

I am delighted to hear that the Secretary of State has granted you the maximum amount of special pension. I know of no case where the concession has been more thoroughly earned.

I hope that you will find some intellectual occupation by which even in your retirement your great knowledge of the people of India and particularly of Bengal, may be made of use to the public.

H. H. RISLEY.

CHAPTER X.

AS A FRIEND ; DOMESTIC LIFE.

Commanding a great position in society my grandfather had an extensive circle of friends ; not only among his own society but also among Europeans, both official and non-official. He had very charming manners that won him life-long friends—not the friends of modern society who grin and nod when accosted, but genuine and sincere ones, who never changed sides and stuck to him like old guns. Truly it could be said of him that the friends he had “their adoption tried, he held with hoops of steel”. The friends of his school-days, of his early official life and his latter-day friends were all received with the same cordiality and pleasure and they had never any occasion to complain on the score of neglect. His hospitality was lavish, and on occasions princely. It was his great pleasure in life like his uncle Rai Jagadananda, to entertain his friends at the best dinners and provide for them the choicest dishes that could be got at an Indian home. Whoever had occasion to go on a pilgrimage to Gya or “up the country” could not resist the temptation of making a halt at his splendid residence at Bankipur and partaking of his hospitality. Europeans and Indians alike were charmed with his talk and admired his ready command of all the current topics of the day. His opinions were received with attention and were much valued.

Any brother officer, or for the matter of that, any officer of any other department, be he a petty clerk or the head, who had occasion to come to him for help in

difficulties—and their number was not insignificant—received equal consideration. The “explanations” written out by him were masterpieces of style and were unassailable. One well-known member of the Indian Civil Service used to speak of him as the “man for explanations” and advise officers to go to him for the purpose. I can bear testimony that at least two or three officers thus tided over their difficulties, when under a cloud. He was ever ready to afford his help to any public cause and would go any length in his power for its furtherance. School-masters, newspaper-editors, impecunious authors, people in distress and his own subordinates were all grateful to him for the ready and substantial help received at his hands. He took up their cause as his own and was never satisfied till he had brought the same to a successful termination. It is amazing to find that he lost very few cases of this nature. Perhaps the causes were just and Providence helped him to win them. The sincere regard, nay affection, in which he was held by his friends will be manifest from the following letters some of which are about half a century old. (I am sorry to note that many valuable papers were lost at the fire which destroyed the bungalow in which he resided at Bankipur shortly after his transfer. My materials are therefore rather scanty). I have put them down in chronological order.

Calcutta, the 31st August, 1874.

My dear Babu Durgagati,

I am in receipt of your favour of the 29th instant. Father returned home last evening. He is very sorry

that in the anxiety of hurrying home he could not do himself the pleasure of seeing you, and therefore wishes to tender his best apologies to you. He tells me that no words can express the kindness and attention which you showed him. Thanks to your arrangements, he did not feel the slightest inconvenience either at Bankipur, on the way, or at Gya.

Father says he had nothing to complain of, on the contrary everything to be grateful for. Though a *sudra*, still he takes the liberty to pray to Heaven to bless you, your family and children, with long life, happiness and prosperity.

It is superfluous for me to say how deeply obliged I feel to you for the kindness shown to father. I can never hope to repay it. Pray accept my most sincere and heartfelt thanks. Trusting this will find you in the enjoyment of good health,

I remain yours very sincerely,
KRISTODAS PAL.

18, BRITISH INDIAN STREET,
1st February, 1875.

My dear friend,

I am exceedingly grieved to learn that the worst has come to pass. It has pleased Heaven to snatch away your beloved daughter. Of course His will be done! but frail man is apt to break down under the weight which is sometimes cast upon him. Our true strength lies in our power of endurance, and as it has been my lot to sustain the severest blows that could befall a man, one coming after another, within the short space of a

year and a half, I only wonder that man can bear so much. Alas ! this is a sad, sad world. Nevertheless we must perform our allotted task, so long as we are in it. I know that when the heart is torn, no human agency can heal it, the solace must come from Above, and the healing balm of time. At the same time I am aware that sorrow shared is soothed, and in that view I beg to offer my sincerest sympathy in your present affliction.

Yours very sincerely,
KRISTO DAS PAL.

Calcutta, 27th September, 1875.

My dear Durgagati Babu,

Many thanks for your kind favour of the 18th instant, I am much obliged to you for your kind enquiry about my health. You are rightly informed that I am suffering from diabetes, the disease is perhaps in an incipient state, for I do not see now its acute signs, I contracted it so far back as 1871. But my health is not very good ; what with the series of family afflictions and over-work, neither my body nor my mind is at rest and I feel the strain very much. Of course I am prepared for the worst. I trust you are doing well. You too had your turn in domestic afflictions and over-work, but I hope you have now restored your equilibrium.

Yours very sincerely,
KRISTO DAS PAL.

Calcutta, 18th February, 1878.

My dear Durgagati Babu,

Thanks many for your kind letter of the 5th. I am really very glad to know that you all like my speech at the "Trades Dinner." It is a satisfaction to me to know that I did not compromise my countrymen in any way.

Allow me to congratulate you on your promotion, though temporary. It has come tardily, but for talents and abilities, which cannot fail to be appreciated by any one, who comes to know you intimately.

I met your good brother Babu Hurrish Chunder at Sara in your trip to Saidpur. He is just like you, amiable, obliging and very intelligent. I wish him success in life.

Yours very sincerely,

KRISTO DAS PAL.

Calcutta, 18th July 1878.

My dear Durgagati Babu,

I am exceedingly sorry to learn that you have been very ill. * * There is nothing stirring now in Calcutta except the little mouse of a Municipality. The mountain had been in labour for a long time and out came a mouse !

I heard a gossip yesterday, not from a reliable source, that four names are on the board for the Collectorship of Calcutta. Mr. Power, Babus Issur Chandra Mittra, and Ramsunker Sen and your good self. You can take it for what it is worth.

Yours very sincerely,

KRISTO DAS PAL.

MANICKTOLLAH,

Calcutta, 21st Novemker, 1877.

My dear Durgagati,

The memory of the days I have spent with you will be ample return for my work. I shall not offend you by thanking you for your kindness and consideration, but believe me, I also feel them very deeply.

With the kindest wishes, in which my brother joins me,

Yours sincerely,

RAJENDRA LALA MITRA.

MANICKTOLLAH,

29th November, 1877.

My dear Durgagati,

It has given me very great pleasure to hear that the L. G. has acknowledged your services with the Medal. As the world goes, it is something, and I sincerely hope and trust it will prove the precursor of something better.

Yours sincerely,

RAJENDRA LALA MITRA.

MANICKTOLLA,

8th February, '78.

My dear Durgagati,

I am delighted to hear of your promotion quite as much as if I had got it myself, or my brother. You deserve it and a great deal more—the highest the Government can give you.

Yours sincerely,

RAJENDRA LALA MITRA.

FAIR VIEW
CHURCH HILL, HONITON,
November 16.

My dear Sir,

I often wish myself back in India and now that my sons are collecting there, I think it far from unlikely that I may sometime or other return. I miss my work greatly. In the meantime it is very pleasant to me to receive your kind assurances that my friends in India have forgotten me as little as I have forgotten them. There are many (and none more than yourself) whom I shall never forget.

* * *

And now, my dear friend of 35 years, I must say good-bye for the present. I shall be very glad to hear from you occasionally and when you have time to write, and I hope I shall always have good news.

With very kind regards to yourself and remembrances to all whom you know as my friends, I am,

Yours sincerely,
C. C. STEVENS.

32, HARCOURT TERRACE.
REDCLIFFE SQUARE, S. W.

Feb. 9.

My dear Sir,

Many thanks for your very kind and friendly note which duly reached me.

* * *

I find that time has not lessened the feeling of "exile", which (as I remarked in my speech at my last St. Andrew's Day Dinner) accompanied my retirement from India ; and I feel sometimes that, happy as I was in the service, even I scarcely appreciated the advantages of my position. I often wish that I could find myself once more among my friends in Bengal, but I see no chance of it.

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With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
C. C. STEVENS.

8 December, '00.

My dear Sir,

I hope this will reach you as near to Christmas as I can get it, and will convey to you in season my good wishes. Though in the case of an old and good friend like yourself, one's feelings of kindness do not in fact vary from time to time but remain constant, yet it is pleasant that there should be one season in the year when the fact of the friendship should be definitely called to mind and acknowledged ; believe me that I do this with great pleasure.

You will have heard long ago of the death of our friend Mr. Jenkins.

*

*

*

*

I have other letters to write and so must say good-bye to you.

With very kind regards,

I am always yours sincerely,
C. C. STEVENS.

July 12.

My dear Sir,

I was very pleased to receive your letter by the last mail and so to get news of you. I am not at all surprised to hear that you don't like giving up work. I should be very glad to return to it, but I cannot say that I much care for trying to get myself elected for work of municipal nature. For one thing, it would go very much against the grain to canvass and specially, as a stranger.

* * * *

Write to me now and then. The sight of your letters is always pleasant to me. With kind regards,

I am yours sincerely,
C. C. STEVENS.

32, Harcourt Terrace,
REDCLIFFE SQUARE, S. W.
16th May, '02.

My dear Sir,

It is so long since I wrote to you or heard from you, that though I am unable to write you a long letter, I have made up my mind not to let another post go without a line from me.

I was much concerned to see in the papers that you were too unwell to meet the L. G. in Birbhum, and I trust that you have recovered so completely and so long ago that you will have forgotten the malady before my condolences reach you.

* * *

India is still in my thoughts as much as ever. A pleasant duty which I fulfilled a few days ago was that of hearing Dr. Bose deliver an admirable lecture. I told him afterwards that we Bengalis are proud of him. Oh ! that the politicians would learn that a single scientist like him does more to raise his native country than a whole troop of orators ! But it is not everyone that can be a Dr. Bose. Now good-bye, let me have news of you.

With very kind regards,

I am yours,
C. C. STEVENS.

32, Harcourt Terrace,
REDCLIFFE SQUARE, S. W.,
Novr. 15th 02.

My dear Sir,

It was so long since I had heard from you that I was beginning to fear that something serious had happened to you. The receipt of your letter by the last mail has to some extent confirmed my fears but has at the same time reassured me, since it has informed me of your improvement which I trust will be continued and lasting in its results.

* * * * *

I have practically no news except that which you may gather from the public papers. I went to see what is generally called "the Judges' train" leave the Victoria Station. That is the train by which the High Court Judges who have been at home on furlough leave London for Dover and Marseilles. I saw a number of Cal-

cutta friends start and I told more than one of them that I envied them, and so I do. Notwithstanding all the great advantages of life in London, I should feel much more at home among my old friends, and with surroundings made familiar to me by so many years of experience.

* * * *

I have been interrupted and can write no more now. But I was anxious not to let this post go without a line to you. I need not say how glad I am to get your letters. With kind remembrances from my wife and daughter,

I am, yours sincerely,

C. C. STEVENS.

EAST INDIA UNITED SERVICE CLUB

ST. JAMES' SQUARE, S. W.

July 28th.

My dear Sir,

I am much obliged by your letters. It was a satisfaction to me to know that the house-rent question has been settled in your favour ; I should have been greatly disappointed if it had not been so. I hope excise questions are being dealt with vigorously in Calcutta.

* * * *

Lady Elliott was glad to hear what you mentioned about Lady Dufferin Hospital, that the alterations made have been satisfactory. We owe this in great measure to Nawab Abdul Latif and yourself. She sends her kind regards and I am,

Yours sincerely,
C. A. ELLIOTT.

S. S. CITY OF CALCUTTA.

December 26th.

Dear Mr. Durgagaty Banerjee,

I must drop you a line to thank you very much for your kind thought of me and the greeting in the shape of such a pretty Christmas Card that I got at Colombo. Sir Charles too was much pleased at your remembrance to us, and indeed I trust you will truly never forget us nor will we forget you. It is a very sad thought, and one that very often comes back to me, to know that our chances of meeting so many of our Indian friends again are but few.

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I do hope all will go well with you and yours in this coming year.

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I am so glad to leave you in the Dufferin Committee and I hope you will always give your opinion on any subject freely and frankly. Please give my kindest regards to your wife—and with the same to yourself,

Yours very sincerely,
ALICE ELLIOTT.

KENNEDY HOUSE,

Simla, 13th November, 1884.

My dear Sir,

I was grieved to learn from your letter of the 3rd instant of the severe domestic bereavement you have suffered, and you have my sincerest sympathy in your sorrow. Certainly misfortune has fallen on you with

a heavy hand of late, and for such misfortune time is the only alleviator. I trust, however, that your health has not seriously suffered, and that you continue to find satisfaction in your work—almost the only solid satisfaction I know in this world.

Lord Ripon's departure is very justly lamented. No man was ever more thoroughly in earnest in his desire to raise the condition of the people entrusted to him, nor has any Viceroy made greater sacrifices in his endeavour to his duty.

Yours very truly,
S. C. BAYLEY.

26th June.

My dear Sir,

Many thanks for your pamphlet. I had read many of the notices before but not all and I am very glad to keep it as a memorial of one who gave me so much assistance.

Yours very truly,
S. C. BAYLEY.

THE RESIDENCY, NAGPUR,

Feby. 14 1891.

Dear Durgagaty Babu,

I was glad to hear from you and to perceive that time is treating you well. You are now getting under masters who do not know you as well as those who are gone, but your sterling work will soon commend you to Sir Charles Elliott, as to his predecessor. I shall always be glad to hear of your advancement.

Yours sincerely,
A. P. MACDONNELL.

VILLA GUICCIARDINI

MONTUGHI,
Florence, June 3 '96

My dear Durgagaty,

* * * *

It also seems clear to my memory that I wrote to tell you of my gratification at the terms of warm friendliness in which both Sir Charles and Lady Elliott spoke of you.

Yours sincerely,
J. W. EDGAR.

MONTUGHI,
23rd May, 1900.

My dear Rai Bahadur,

Your letter has been very welcome though it was at first painful to think that my silence should have seemed to you due to some decrease of friendly feeling. This has been very far from the real fact. I have always thought of you with unchanged regard and rejoiced to know that you are still able to serve the Government in such honourable and important capacities. My silence has been mainly due to the failure of faculties inseparable from advancing age and, in some measure, to defective health which makes writing letters a weariness to me. * *. I trust you will kindly act on this hint in future, and should I fail to acknowledge a letter within reasonable time, "call for an explanation."

Yours sincerely,
JOHN EDGAR.

VILLA GUICCIARDINI

VIA DI MONTUGHI

Firenze, Italy, 29th June.

My dear Durgagaty,

* * * *

How are you getting on? I trust your health is keeping good this hot weather and that work is going on prosperously. The welfare of my old friends in India will always be very near my heart and if at any time it should be in my power to help them in any way, they may rely on my exertions not being spared, and I trust that you and others will not fail to write to me from time to time to let me know how you are getting on.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN EDGAR.

LOCHNAGAR,

August, 27th, 1901.

My dear Sir,

I am concerned to hear such a poor account of your health. There is no doubt that the sudden cessation from active mental work is undoubtedly prejudicial to health. I have often seen this in the case of retired officers in England. Is there nothing which suggests itself to you by which you could have such employment?

I hope to hear better accounts of you.

Yours very truly,
J. MONRO.

WHITEHALL PLACE, S. W.
London, 16th December 1887.

My dear Sir,

Like many of my friends you must have thought me very remiss in the matter of correspondence. Want of time and not of will has been the cause. For many months past I have been overwhelmed with work.

* * * *

I have by last mail despatched to your address a writing set which I hope will reach you safely, and which I hope, you will accept from me as a token of friendly feeling, and as a memento of old times, when I served in India with you.

Yours very truly,
J. MONRO.

22nd September, 1902.

My dear Sir,

* * * *

I am delighted to hear of your triumph at the Excise Conference.

* * * *

Permit me also to compliment you on your admirable work in the *hundi*, or rather "Barati chitty", business.

Yours sincerely,
H. H. RISLEY.

10, WESTBOURNE CRESCENT, HYDE PARK,
London, W, 12th February 1903.

My dear Babu Durgagaty Banerjee,

Very many thanks for your extremely kind letter which arrived by this mail. My father's death was a

great shock to us all, the more so as, though he had been ailing for some time past, the end came suddenly. It is comfort for us to feel that we have the sympathy of his friends with us in our trouble, especially when that sympathy comes from such an old friend as yourself, of whom I have often heard him speak in terms of great regard.

* * *

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,
F. O'KINEALY.

THE STATESMAN,
3, Chowringhee,

Calcutta, 24th March, 1900.

Dear Mr. Durgagaty,

* * *

I write to thank you very warmly on behalf of my brother and my own for the great assistance you have given us and all the trouble you have taken in carrying the matter through so successfully.

Believe me yours very truly,

R. KNIGHT.

BAR LIBRARY,

Calcutta, 4th September, 1888.

My dear Sir,

I send with this some 30 copies of the printed appeal on behalf of the City College Building Fund. I have to thank you most heartily for your very kind promise of help to this attempt, the first of its kind, I believe, to place the important cause of national education on a

safe and permanent basis. No appeal could have issued under more distinguished auspices or with higher or more important testimony to the value and efficiency of the work done by the City College. Both the Lieutenant-Governor and Mr. Edgar have been kind enough to take a special interest in the movement. Should we fail under such circumstances and with such generous help as you have been good enough to offer, it would be unfortunate indeed. But I venture very earnestly to think that this will not and cannot be so. ,

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I remain,

Yours very truly,
A. M. BOSE.

DUMRAON,
12th February, 1897.

Dear Sir,

I would further wish to avail myself of the valuable advice in all interest given to us, of eminent persons like yourself, who have always been regarded by my father-in-law, my husband, myself and my late Dewan, as the greatest friends of the Raj.

I believe that the scheme of forming a Council of Management will meet with your approbation and that you will in my present difficulty sympathise with me, and oblige me by expressing your consent at your earliest convenience to my mentioning your name in this connection to the Government Officials.

Yours sincerely,
MAHARANI BENIPROSAD KOER,
OF DUMRAON.

The late Maharaja Sir Krishna Protap Sahee held him in great regard and thought him "a great friend" and one from whom he could get anything he wanted.

The late Babu Sishir Kumar Ghosh considered him as one of the ablest men that he had ever come across in India and characterised him as a "man of heart".

Behar, 7th March 1882.

My dear Durgagaty Babu,

You should not have marred the effect of such a kind and happy letter by addressing me with a "Babu". You know what regard I conceived for you before I had the honour of even knowing you by sight, and allow me to tell you that in the whole extensive circle of your friends, you have not one who has a warmer and sincerer regard and love for you than my unworthy self.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

NOBIN CHANDRA SEN.

Behar, 3rd November.

My dear Durgagaty Babu,

I do not know whether I should or should not, perhaps I ought to, congratulate you on your "installation" as the personal assistant of the Presidency Division. So you are going and to one like myself the only consolation is that you are going with "blushing honours thick" on you. The Gazette has cast a dampness on my spirits. I wish I could follow you to the Presidency Division.

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Yours sincerely,

NOBIN CHANDRA SEN.

Babu Surendra Nath Bannerjee wrote of him as "a friend for whom he had much respect and admiration".

Manirampur, 8th June, 1893.

My dear Durgagati Babu,

Accept my warmest thanks for your kind congratulations. I cannot forget that I owe my seat to your earnest interest in the matter and I am grateful to you for it. In the discharge of my duties as a member of Council, I shall endeavour to retain the confidence which you and others like yourself have been good enough to place in me.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

SURENDRA NATH BANNERJEE.

23-2 RAJA RAJENDRA MULLICK'S STREET,

Calcutta, 21st November, 1899.

My dear Sir,

I am extremely thankful to you for your kind note of last week. It breathes the kindest sentiments towards me. It is a source of great happiness to me to think that I enjoy the good opinion of those whose merits and sterling virtues are universally admitted. I shall see you with a copy of the despatch of His Excellency the Viceroy and the Hon'ble members of his Council recommending the small pension to me. The language of the despatch is highly complimentary. It makes up for the smallness of the amount.

With best wishes,

I remain very sincerely yours,

KISORI MOHON GANGULI.

15, ELYSIUM ROW,
2nd May, 1900.

My dear Durgagati Babu,

Many thanks for your kind congratulations and very kind wishes for the future. I fully appreciate and reciprocate your friendly feelings, and count you as one of my true and sincere friends. With kind regards and best wishes,

I remain,
Yours very sincerely,
B. L. GUPTA.

Babu Nabin Chandra Mitra, Deputy Magistrate, once wrote to him—"You always sincerely wished my welfare and nobody in the world did so much to help me in life as your kind self". Babu Srikrishna Chatterjee of the Education Department and one of his intimate friends wrote :—"There is no sacrifice you consider too much for your poor friend".

After retirement, his health became impaired, as often happens in the case of persons of active habits owing to a sudden change in, or cessation of, occupation. His liver became deranged, with the result that obstinate hiccoughs supervened, but thanks to his wonderful vitality, he recovered and received the congratulations of his friends. I quote below a letter from Mr. Buckland :—

THE CLUB, DARJEELING,
20th September, 1901.

My dear Durgagaty,

I was indeed rejoiced to get your letter of the 18th and to see your hand-writing again and to gather that

you are now well on the road to recovery. Nothing has given me greater pleasure than this in these latter days. We cannot afford to lose you yet a long while.

* * * * *

It was very good of Manmatha to write to me so regularly while you were ill, and I shall not forget this.

Yours very sincerely,
C. E. BUCKLAND.

Mr. Monro wrote to me as follows :—

LOCHNAGAR, DARJEELING.

19th Sept. 1901.

My dear Sir,

I am very glad to have such reassuring accounts of your grandfather's health. I sincerely trust that his recovery will be complete and speedily established and that I shall soon be able to cease writing of him as an invalid. Meanwhile, pray give him my very kind remembrances and best wishes for his entire restoration to health.

Yours very truly,
J. MONRO.

Babu Durgagaty was very unfortunate in his domestic life. The happiness of the hearth was denied him—and he was born to suffer misfortune after misfortune. His first wife, who was a blessing to him, died in 1870 after a prolonged illness. He had only three daughters by her and no male issue. His eldest daughter who had been married the year before with great pomp went to her last home six years after, plunging him in the

deepest grief. It was about this daughter that Mr. R. P. Jenkins wrote, "I am glad to hear your daughter's marriage has gone off well and I trust the poor little girl will have got a really good man for a husband and that you have not married her, as is the native fashion, because the boy is of a superior house or family and without duly weighing the merits of the lad to have a wife at all".

Eight years later he lost his second daughter at child-birth and in the 'next, his son-in-law, her husband, who was a rising Vakil of the High Court. Again eight years after, he lost both his parents within a week. They had lived up to a ripe old age and the mother preceded the father—an exceptionally fortunate thing in Hindu society, especially when the latter was an octogenarian. Both were cremated in the same pyre at Nimtollah. He received among others the following letters of condolence :—

CALCUTTA,
4th February, 1902.

My dear Durgagaty,

I was much grieved to learn the loss which you have suffered but felt unwilling to intrude on your sorrow during the first period of your mourning. Let me now assure you of my sympathy with yourself and your family.

Yours sincerely,
J. W. EDGAR.

23. 1. 92.

My dear Durgagaty.

I am very sorry to hear your sad news. One touch of nature makes the whole world kin, and one can fully realise what your sorrow must be. No one can ever supply a mother's place or fill the gap. You can only feel that all that human skill could done was done, and that the issue was in the hands of a Higher power.

Yours sincerely,
C. E. BUCKLAND.

KRISHNAGUR,
February 9, 1892.

My dear Sir,

I am grieved indeed to learn of the affliction which has befallen you, and as one who has shared in the sorrow of loss of parents, I send you a line of sincere sympathy in your bereavement. Pray do not trouble to answer my last enquiries till perfectly convenient to you. My daughter sends an expression of her sympathy with you and your family in your sorrow.

Yours very truly,
J. MONRO.

The next year he lost his uncle Rai Jagadananda for whom he had the greatest love and esteem. Later on, he lost his second brother and a sister. He married a second time in 1871 but he left no issue by that marriage. His widow and his youngest daughter survive him.

No public movement could be complete without

him. He took a prominent part in the feeding of the poor in Calcutta in connection with the Coronation of His Majesty Edward VII in 1903 and laboured very hard, with the consequence that his old enemy, a trouble in the liver, appeared. On the 1st February he suddenly became unconscious early in the morning. His medical attendant, Dr. D. N. Roy was summoned. At first it was thought to be paralysis. For three days and nights he remained senseless, but thanks to the careful treatment of Dr. Roy, he regained consciousness on the morning of the fourth day. Unfortunately, however, complication after complication supervened and he breathed his last on the 26th March 1903—just two years after retirement. Thus the great soul passed away to find eternal rest in the lap of the Dispenser of all good.

The letters and Press notices at his last illness and death are given below :—

U. S. CLUB,

Calcutta, February 10, 1903.

My dear Sir,

I have been greatly distressed at hearing of your illness and was relieved to see in to-day's papers that you are somewhat better. I trust you will soon be thoroughly restored to health.

I know of course that you will not be able to answer this, but possibly some friend may be able to send me a line to say how you are getting on.

Yours very sincerely,
E. N. BAKER.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor sent a wire through his Private Secretary from Muzzafferpore where he had been camping, enquiring about the Rai Bahadur's illness, which was followed by a letter the next day from Belvedere.

The newspapers also noticed his illness in the following terms :—

We deeply regret to hear that Rai Durgagaty Bannerjee Bahadur C. I. E. late Collector of Calcutta, is very dangerously ill at his residence 9, Marquis Street. He had a stroke of apoplexy early on Sunday morning, and has not since recovered consciousness. He was actively engaged in the arrangements connected with the feeding of the poor by Babu Bhajan Lal Lohia last week, and apparently overtaxed his strength.—*The Englishman*.

His numerous friends in Calcutta will learn with regret that Rai Durgagati Bannerjee Bahadur C. I. E., late Collector of Calcutta is lying seriously ill at his residence 9, Marquis Street. He had a stroke of apoplexy early on Sunday morning, when he became quite unconscious, and has been in that condition up to the present time. Dr. D. N. Roy and Dr. J. N. Ghose have been in close attendance ever since the attack came on. It was with Rai Durgagati Bannerjee that the idea originated of feeding the poor as one of the functions of the recent Coronation festivities in Calcutta, and it was he who brought the philanthropist Babu Bhajan Lal Lohia before the Executive Committee. The idea having taken practical form, he was most energetic in seeing everything in connection with it carried

out from start to finish. The day the poor were fed on the maidan, he exposed himself for many hours in the sun and it is believed that this induced the serious ailment from which he is now suffering.—*The Indian Daily News*.

The condition of Rai Durgagati Banerjee Bahadur C. I. E. who is lying seriously ill and unconcious at his residence 9, Marquis Street, notwithstanding the medical skill of Dr. D. N. Roy and Dr. J. N. Ghosh who are attending him, continues to give cause for grave anxiety. Yesterday afternoon his condition was exactly the same as it was the day previous.—*The Indian Daily News*.

We are glad to state that Rai Durgagati Banerjee Bahadur, C. I. E., is slightly better. From Wednesday evening he showed symptoms of regaining consciousness. If he continues to make the same progress, hopes may be entertained of his recovery.—*The Indian Daily News*.

We regret to hear that Rai Durgagati Banerjee Banerjee Bahadur C. I. E. Collector of Calcutta, is very dangerously ill at his residence, 9, Marquis Street. He had a stroke of apoplexy early on Sunday morning, and has not since recovered consciousness. He was actively engaged in the arrangements connected with the feeding of the poor by Babu Bhajan Lal Lohia last week, and apparently overtaxed his strength.—*The Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

We were shocked and distressed to read the following announcement in yesterday's issue of the *Englishman* :— "We deeply regret to hear that Rai Durgagati

Bannerji Bahadur C. I. E., late Collector of Calcutta, is very dangerously ill at his residence 9 Marquis Street. He had a stroke of apoplexy early on Sunday morning, and has not since recovered consciousness. He was actively engaged in the arrangements connected with the feeding of the poor by Babu Bhajan Lal Lohia last week, and apparently overtaxed his strength." We think our contemporary to be quite right in his diagnosis. Rai Durgagati Bannerjee pressed upon ourselves the request that we should witness the feeding of the Hindu poor. We accompanied him to the scene and can testify that the afflicted gentleman had his heart and soul in the service of the poor.—*The Indian Mirror*.

On his death H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor made the following feeling reference about him at the Durbar held at Belvedere shortly after :—

"Gentlemen, before closing this Durbar I cannot refrain from referring to the ravages which death has made in our community during the past year. Memories of our late beloved Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Woodburn, must have been present in the minds of all who have taken part in this scene, which in the ordinary course he would have conducted on the eve of his departure with his characteristic kindness, courtesy and dignity. Two other prominent figures in Calcutta society have passed away within the last few days in Maharaja Bahadur Sir Narendra Krishna K. C. I. E., and in Rai Bahadur Durgagati Banerjea C. I. E. Of the former whose death has called forth a unanimous chorus of esteem and regret I shall have more to say on

another occasion. In the latter, who expired only yesterday, the Government has lost a faithful servant and trusted adviser, and I, an intimate friend of 30 years' standing. Let us hope that the coming twelve-month may not witness the fall of so many worthy pillars of the State, whom the Province of Bengal can ill-spare, but that on the contrary it may prove to be a period of peace and prosperity, not only to the Province at large, but to all those who are present here to-day.

The Hon'ble Mr. C. E. Buckland wrote to me—
 "Your grand-father's death was nothing but a calamity ;
 and it was so to me personally as much nearly as to
 many of his family."

Mr. Monro wrote to me the following letter ;—

LOCHNAGAR,
Darjeeling, 29. 3. 03.

My dear Sir,

The sad intelligence which your letter of 27th gives
 grieved me much. I can assure you of my cordial sym-
 pathy with you and all the family in the sorrow which
 you must feel at the death of your distinguished grand-
 father. In him I lose a valued friend, whose memory
 I shall ever hold in high esteem.

Yours very truly,
 JAMES MONRO.

Mr. H. E. A. Cotton wrote—

37, CHOWRINGHEE,
Calcutta, 27th March 1903.

My dear Manmatha Babu,

I am indeed grieved to learn of Durgagati Babu's death. He was for so many years on terms of such intimate friendship with Sir Henry Cotton, and showed me so many acts of kindness that I look upon his loss as quite a personal one. I need not say how grieved my father will be when he receives the news. I can do no more than offer you my warmest sympathy, but you may rest assured that my words are spoken from the bottom of my heart.

Yours truly,
H. E. A. COTTON.

We regret to hear that Rai Durgagati Banerjee Bahadur, C. I. E. late Collector of Calcutta died on Thursday last, passing away quietly at 2 p. m. at his residence, 9 Marquis Street. It will be remembered that he was struck down with an attack of apoplexy at the end of January, after the occasion of the feeding of the poor of Calcutta on the Maidan, in which he took great interest and over-exerted himself. Since then he has lingered in a state of great weakness, though in possession of his mental faculties. He had a distinguished career in the Government service. He entered the Subordinate Executive Service (now the Provincial Service) as a Deputy Magistrate in August 1865, after

being employed for a few years in non-gazetted appointments. His ability soon attracting attention, he was nominated Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of Patna in May 1867, and held that appointment for 15 years with the exception of a few months in 1872 as Head Assistant of the Judicial Branch of the Bengal Secretariat. He was transferred to the Presidency Division as Personal Assistant to the Commissioner in December 1882 and was appointed a member of the Salaries Commission, with Mr. J. Beames and Mr. W. H. Grimley, in 1885. After officiating for a period he was, in April 1889, confirmed as Collector of Calcutta and held that appointment until he retired in January 1901 after eight years' extension of service. He was a member of the Bengal Legislative Council on Sir C. Elliott's nomination for two years from March 1895 and was decorated with the C. I. E. on the 1st January of the same year. During his tenure of the Collectorate of Calcutta the excise and stamp revenue increased considerably, greatly owing to his ability and personal exertions, while his popularity with the mercantile and other non-official classes of Calcutta was fully recognised on his retirement, by the testimonials which he received. In due course an extra pension of Rs. 1000 a year was granted him by the Secretary of State, though he has not lived long to enjoy it. He enjoyed the confidence of many of the highest officials, who appreciated his good work and valued his advice and loyalty. Among the native community he was held in the highest respect and esteem, being regarded as the doyen of the executive service.—*The Englishman*.

After lingering through a painful illness for over two months Babu Durgagati Bannerji has at last breathed his last. The deceased gentleman was an honour to the service to which he belonged, and before his retirement was Collector of Calcutta, in which office he acquired the unreserved confidence and respect of the Indians and Europeans alike, and all who knew him will mourn the loss of an excellent public official, an estimable citizen, and a sincere friend,—*The Indian Mirror*.



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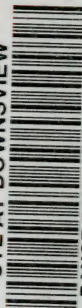
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Life of Rai Durgagati
Banerjea Bahadur

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